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*HADES;*

*OR, THE INTERMEDIATE STATE OF MAN.*



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# HADES;

OR,

## THE INTERMEDIATE STATE OF MAN.

BY

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## PREFACE.

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I. THERE are few subjects connected with theology on which so much variety of thought, and so much confusion of thought, exists, as on the subject of Hades, or the Intermediate State of Man. By this state I mean the condition of man from the time that he dies to the time that he rises from the dead. To lay this before the minds of thinking men as it is presented in God's Word is the object of my present work.

II. I must be met by honest argument, and not by declamation. The work which I now present to the public has cost me much time and much thought. I have not rushed hastily or thoughtlessly into the subject. Drawing towards the close of my life, knowing the awful responsibility of speaking at all upon themes like this, I would not dare to put forward what I now do unless I felt it to be my duty to do so. To the best of my ability I have studied what God's Word here teaches. I have prayed for guidance that I might not go astray. I knew that all but universal opinion was against me, and, therefore, I proceeded the more cautiously.

III. As I have pursued my argument I must be met by my opponents; to reasoning, reasoning must be opposed. My arguments from Scripture must be overthrown from that source. In this day, when everything is sifted and examined, it will not do to be told that common opinion is against me. The old cry of materialism, which used to be so potent, will not suffice to overthrow me. There is a good deal of materialism in the Book which tells us that God made man out of the dust or matter of the earth. These and similar methods must be abandoned

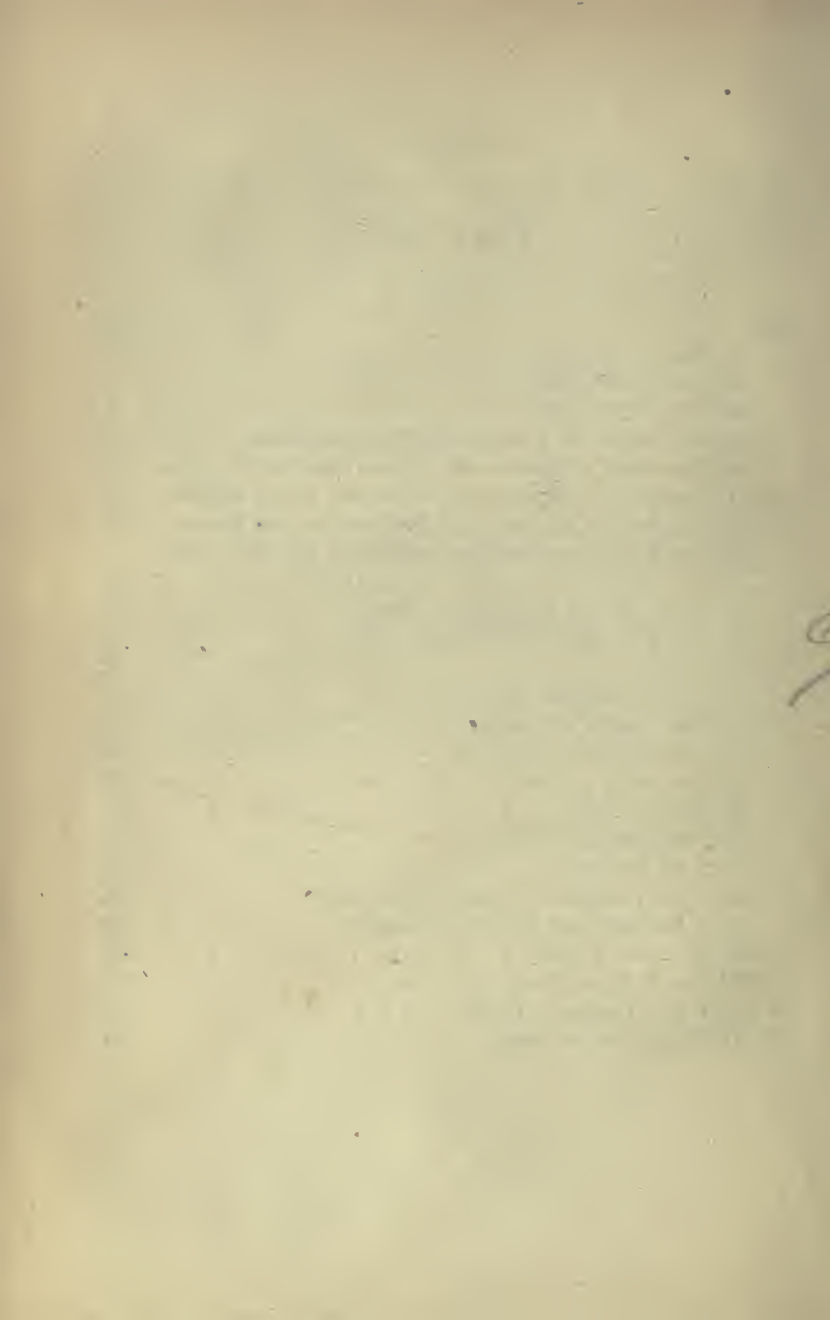
now. Men of Christian character and deep reflection have fully adopted the views here presented. Others, in increasing numbers, are inquiring closely whether these views are true or not. If I stood alone, I might be overlooked or cried down; but the question has now taken too firm a hold on many minds to be disposed of thus.

IV. To the lovers of truth in the various Churches of Christ I commend this effort to clear up and establish upon its Scriptural basis a most important question. I ask only for a candid hearing; I ask only for readers who will say, If the view here advocated be indeed God's truth, we will accept it with all our hearts. That view—I say without hesitation—is one that does not subvert, but upholds and brings into their proper prominence some of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith. They who regard the Coming of Christ and the Resurrection as indeed the Hope of the Church, will see how the view of Hades here advocated at once and of necessity gives to these articles of our faith that foremost place which the Bible gives them, but from which popular teaching has almost completely removed them.

HENRY CONSTABLE.

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# H A D E S.

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## CHAPTER I.

### MAN IN HIS ORIGIN.

I. IT will scarcely be disputed that in this inquiry into the intermediate state of man, the preliminary inquiry must be, What is man? The understanding of human nature, so far as it can be understood by us, will of necessity be found the very best guide to our understanding what is affirmed of it in any of its conditions.

II. Now here we have no doubt whatsoever that most Christian inquirers have approached this fundamental question from the wrong side. As it appears to us, we have, mostly, formed our opinions of human nature from some philosophical system, and then, if we have not deemed any further inquiry altogether superfluous, applied ourselves to Scripture chiefly for the purpose of confirming a foregone conclusion. This appears to us to be altogether and completely an error. To the believer in the divine authority of Scripture there can be no dispute as to whether it or any human philosopher can speak upon this point with the greater weight. The only question can be as to whether Scripture has here given us information. If it has, it cannot be disputed that the Maker of man is the One who is best able to inform us as to the nature of the creature of His hands. One verse of the Bible on the nature of man, on the source of his life, on the meaning of his death, must outweigh a whole treatise of Plato, Aristotle, or Epicurus.

III. Now certainly, when we read the Scriptures with any care, we will repeatedly find that they do speak on this question. They do not indeed speak on it in the way of formal treatise; but they seldom speak in this way of any of their doctrines. Systems of theology may be drawn from Scripture, but Scripture itself does not, generally, propound theology in this systematic way. Its definitions and descriptions of man, in all his conditions, in his rude origin and mature completion, in life, and death, and resurrection, will be found by any fair inquirer to be just as full and systematic as its declarations upon almost any other subject on which it treats. We will then endeavour to learn what we can of man from our Bible. If we are not greatly mistaken it will give us as full and as clear ideas of him as we

require. More than this we cannot ask. We also believe that any real additional information beyond what we have in the Bible is not to be found in philosophical treatises upon human nature. They may be full where Scripture is only brief; but where they pretend to add to the real amount derivable from Scripture, we are quite satisfied that they are at best but guessing, and are generally wrong.

Almost the earliest, and certainly the fullest account we have given us of human nature is in Gen. ii. 7. It is worthy of our closest consideration. It is the word of the Maker, telling us what the creature was which He made. The words are "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

IV. No careful reader of this verse can fail to see that the creation of man is described in two distinct stages, in each of which he is spoken of as man, though his condition in these two stages is widely different. The first stage is the creation of the organised body and figure in a lifeless state: "God formed man of the dust of the ground." Here we have the figure as it lay lifeless and thoughtless. And yet this figure was man. We cannot dispute this, for God tells us so Himself. It was man before he could think, or feel, or breathe."

V. That we are not straining language with any desire to accommodate it to a theory is evident from the fact that writers and reasoners of the highest ability, and whose opinions on the subject of our present work differ altogether from ours, have taken the very same view of it that we do. "Man," says Bishop Hall, in his "Contemplations," "God did first form, then inspire." "Man," says Augustine, "was up to this only body." "He was already man," says Tertullian, "who as yet was but earth."\*

VI. Now this is a most important point to be clearly understood. We have brought before us in this verse what man originally was. We have here told us by God Himself all that we can truly and properly claim as our own. Here is our original. It is not much. It is dust. This is a great point to be clear upon. Man did not become man after the breath of life was breathed into him: he was man before. He was man when as yet he had no life; when he had neither spirit nor soul, whatever ideas are to be attached to those terms, placed within him by his Maker. "God formed man of the dust of the ground." We insist upon the plain meaning of this Scripture to its fullest extent. We are here not told that God formed man out of dust and spirit, or out of dust and soul, but out of dust and dust only. Man now has soul and spirit. They belong to him so long as God leaves them to him. But the time was, be it long or short, when he had neither one nor other, and yet was man. And our plain inference is that the time might come when

\* Hall's Contemplations "Of Man;" Augustine, l. 497; Tertullian, "Resurrection of the Flesh," chap. v. 103.

he would be bereft of both, and yet, when that which was thus bereft of soul and spirit would still be man.

VII. It will be well here to give the opposite view of man as to what he is thought properly to be, and to which we suppose the text in Gen. ii. 7, to be flatly opposed. It is the Platonic view of human nature, now in its main features thoroughly incorporated into our prevailing Christian theology, so that to most minds it appears to be as much a part of divine revelation as the existence of God, the incarnation of Christ, or future rewards and punishments. According, then, to Plato, man was not formed out of the dust of the ground. Man was truly and properly a soul, which, for one reason or other, was united to a body. This union to body Plato considered an evil, and he therefore regarded death as a blessing in itself, inasmuch as it dissolved the undesirable union, and freed the soul, *i.e.*, the man, from that which was a clog and a burden to him. Death was, in Plato's view, not the cessation of existence to man, but the change of his mode and condition of life, a change to the good man of sure and unmitigated blessing.\*

VIII. It will be quite plain to any one acquainted with the theology of Christendom how deeply the Platonic idea has interpenetrated it. We do not, of course, say that Christian divines have adopted the entire theory of Plato. Few of them, for instance, agree with his idea that the soul had an existence long before its union with the body: they generally suppose, we believe, that the body of each man is formed prior to, or at all events, contemporaneously with his soul. Again, few of them believe with Plato, that the dissolution of soul and body will be permanent. The Christian doctrine of a bodily resurrection forbids them to suppose this. Their theory of necessity most grievously disparages the importance of the resurrection of the body, because it teaches that man has a true life without the body; but still, few of them openly dispute the idea of the re-union of soul and body, however little they can possibly see it to be required. But the idea of Plato that what he supposes the soul is the true and proper man, and that the body is not the true and proper man, has undoubtedly pervaded Christian theology to its very core. Thus Bishop Butler, one of the greatest thinkers that England has produced, has devoted a chapter of his grand "Analogy" to prove that "our organised bodies are no part of ourselves," and that man can and will exist in the truth of his nature, when his body lies in the grave in dust. And John Wesley, a man of profound mind, has thus defined his idea of man's nature: "I am now," he says, "an immortal spirit, strangely commingled with a little portion of earth. In a short time I am to quit this tenement of clay, and remove into another state."†

\* Plato, "Phædo."

† Butler's "Analogy," ch. i.; Wesley's Sermons, ii. 721-9 (*Rainbow*, 1871, p. 177). G. S. Faber, "The Many Mansions." 2nd ed. 151.

It will not be disputed that Butler and Wesley here represent the current opinion of Christendom. They do not hold the body to be the true man, or essential to the idea of man. Man is, with them, a soul, which may or may not inhabit the body, but which, whether inhabiting the body or not inhabiting it, is the true and proper man. This opinion, we believe to be the very foundation stone of an amazing amount of false doctrine. This false philosophy regarding human nature has tainted the theology of centuries.

IX. Nor can it be said that it is only the text of Gen. ii. 7, which teaches a philosophy of our nature directly opposed to that of Butler and Wesley. All subsequent Scriptures give us the very same idea which we have taken from this old text. Thus when man had sinned, and God came to him to pronounce his doom, God reiterates in even fuller terms the first description of his proper nature. He tells Adam that he is to "return to the ground, for out of it he was taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. iii. 19.) How different, how opposed to Wesley's definition: "I am an immortal spirit, strangely commingled with a little portion of earth!" We surely cannot place the two definitions together without perceiving that they convey different and opposing ideas. The idea conveyed in God's words was that adopted by the old saints. Thus, when Abraham takes upon him to intercede for Sodom he says, "Behold, now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but (only) dust and ashes."\*

X. If we look into the accounts of Scripture, we will find also that where death has taken place, when spirit and soul have left the body, when the body has been brought to that very condition in which Adam's body was ere God breathed into it the breath of life, yet this body thus reft of all life is still regarded in Scripture as the man. Popular theology teaches that in death the body is but like a garment laid aside from use, or a dwelling abandoned, while the wearer of the garment, or the dweller in the house, *i.e.*, the soul, the real man, has gone elsewhere. But certainly this is not the view taken in Scripture. The very opposite view is there taken. The body, dead and lifeless though it be, is there looked on as the man. Thus, whenever we read of burial throughout Scripture, we invariably read that Sarah, or Abraham, or Jacob, or Moses, or others as the case may be, are buried in the grave.† We never read anything of our common language on monumental stones and in funeral sermons, that all that is mortal of such or such a one lies in the grave, while he has himself gone elsewhere. The person, the individual, the man, he who was once alive, is throughout Scripture spoken of as lying in the grave.

XI. We will just look at one or two instances of the kind which are related at some length in Scripture. The widow woman at

\* Gen. xviii. 27. Homilies, "Misery of Mankind."

† Gen. xxv. 10; xlix. 31; 1 Kings xlii. 31; Acts ii. 29; 1 Cor. xv. 4.



Zarephath has lost her son by death. Breath, spirit, soul, life, all have left the corpse. It lies colourless and rigid and lifeless. Yet Elijah regards this lifeless figure as still the widow's son. "And he said unto her, *Give me thy son.* And he took *him* out of her bosom, and carried *him* up into a loft, and laid *him* upon his own bed."\* The dead body is regarded by the prophet as the man. In the very same way our blessed Lord speaks. Lazarus his friend has died. Where did Christ think and say that Lazarus was? In the grave. "Where have ye laid *him*?" He said to the standers by, and they pointed out the grave. Over the grave stands the Lord of life and He addresses what lay in that grave as Lazarus. "He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth."†

XII. We will now draw attention to another Scripture, which establishes our view that with the body is essentially bound up the personality of man; that without the body it is not allowed that the man can be said to be. "I am an immortal spirit," says John Wesley. John Wesley thought that this spirit was his true self, that where it was he was, and where it went he went. But our great Teacher teaches an opposite doctrine. It is the evening of His resurrection from the grave. As His disciples speak of the wonders of that day, "*Jesus Himself* stood in the midst of them." At the sight, "they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit." Jesus proceeds to disabuse them of their error. He tells them, "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself."‡ In the mind of Jesus His body was absolutely essential to His personality. A spirit, whatever ideas we may attach to that term, was not, and could not be, Jesus Himself. He does not allow us for a moment to suppose that He could exist as a man independently of His body. Our modern notion that the true I, the true man, is a spirit, or a soul, which may leave the body, and yet without the body be the man, is rejected by our Lord.

XIII. If we are content, then, to take the teaching of Scripture as our guide, we will see that its teaching is that man in his origin was made of earth in the very same way that all the lower creatures were created from it: that to any true conception of man the idea of body is absolutely essential: that no subsequent addition of spirit or soul, whatever be the ideas we attach to these terms, can assume to have superseded this idea of man; that as they were once disassociated from man, viz., ere God had given them to man, so they may again be disassociated from man: that man may return to his old condition ere he had them at all, and the dead body they have left is then the man, the person, the self.

\* 1 Kings xvii. 17—19.

† John xi. 34—44.

‡ Luke xxiv. 36—39.

## CHAPTER II.

## MAN ONE PERSON.

I. BEFORE we proceed to discuss the nature and properties of soul and spirit, so far as they are told us in Scripture, it may be well to say a few words on the utter absurdity of supposing them apart from the body, to be man, or a person. We suppose that every one will allow that each man constitutes only a single person. We suppose that no one will maintain that any change of which man is capable can have as its result the making of two men or two persons out of what was but one. In life we allow that each individual, however composed, is yet but a single person. No one can surely contend that death converts this single person into two or three!

II. We will in the course of our inquiry have a good deal to say about Death, and what it is. We do not accept the common definition of death as regards man to be an *adequate* definition of it, but we fully accept it as a *true* definition of it, to a certain extent. The definition we refer to, is that death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body. As we have said, we accept this as perfectly scriptural and true: we only object to it as not conveying the entire idea of what Scripture means and defines by death. But death is unquestionably the dissolution of union, the separation of the spirit and soul from the body of man.

III. Now what is the result as regards *person*? Has it made two persons out of one? We wait for an advocate so hardy as to say that it has. Until he appears, we will assume that there is no man of sense or reflection who will say that it has. At once there is brought before us the question, whether is the body without the spirit, or the spirit or soul or both without the body, the true and real person? Plato has decided the question in his own way. He never fancied that death made two persons out of one, but he did fancy that death separated the true and real person from what had been associated with it for a time. With him the true real person was the soul. To it he gave all the attributes of personality. Accordingly, when death came, and the soul was separated from the body, the true person, the soul, went forth, leaving that body which was not a person, but had only been associated with a person, behind. When Plato makes Socrates speak of death and its separation, he makes him say always, "I depart hence to-day," "I depart to the gods." The separated soul he supposes to be the true person, to be Socrates. He is not guilty of the absurdity of supposing that another Socrates remained behind in the lifeless corpse.\* He expressly denies that what the sad

\* Plato's "Phædo," 56: 5: 12.

friends of the philosopher would then look upon would be Socrates at all. Socrates had gone away: was beyond the sky: the dead body they looked at no more deserved to be called Socrates than would an old garment which Socrates had worn and laid aside. The only difference was that he had worn one garment, the body made of clay, longer than another garment, the dress composed of wool.

IV. Now unquestionably our Platonic divines in heart adopt the theory of Plato. But then they are clogged with their recognition of a book of which Plato was ignorant—the Bible. This Bible persists in calling the body when dead the man. It says that Abraham, and Jacob, and David, and others departed from life, are in the grave, and it never says that they are in heaven, or anywhere else but in the grave. Now here is the perplexity of the theologians who platonicise. They cannot deny that the persons who have departed from life are in the grave, without denying those numberless Scriptures which say they are. They therefore in words, whatever they think in their hearts, allow that they are in the grave. But they also hold, and possibly, if not probably, with a stronger faith, that these persons are in heaven, or hell, or a Hades distinct from the grave! And thus we see that the recognition of spirit or soul, separate or united to each other, distinct or different names for the same essence, leads its Christian maintainers to the absurdity of supposing that death has converted *one person into two*. In life there was but one Abraham, in death there are two; in life there was but one David, in death there are two Davids! In life there was but one Christ; during the three days of his death there were two. One David was in the sepulchre at Jerusalem; another David was somewhere else. One Christ was in Joseph's tomb; another Christ was preaching to spirits in prison, or otherwise busily occupied. One Abraham was asleep and dead; another Abraham awake and living! Such is the absurd yet necessary conclusion to which men who accept the Scriptures as true are led when they adopt the philosophical idea that the soul or spirit separated from the body is the true man, or a man or a person at all!

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### CHAPTER III.

#### MAN, A LIVING SOUL.

I. WHEN we say that man was originally and properly earth, and that what he originally was he might and does become again, we are far indeed from supposing that this was all he was intended to become when God formed him. God had a far higher end in view for man. The figure which in its organised but yet lifeless state was man, was also to be man endowed with life and capacities of a high order. We come then to the final stage in the creation of the human race.

II. When we read in Gen. ii. 7, that "God formed man of the dust of the ground," we find it added that he also "breathed into his nostrils the *breath of life*, and man became a living soul." Man had been at first a beautifully fashioned and wonderfully organised lifeless figure. He becomes by a further act of God a living soul. How he became so we are told, as well as what he became.

III. God breathed into the nostrils of the lifeless figure *the breath of life*. (*Nishmath chajim*.) We will farther on bring *proof* from Scripture as to what this breath of life was. We will at this stage of our inquiry assume that it is identical with what is elsewhere called "the spirit," or "the spirit of man," or "the spirit of God." (*Ruach*.) We will here also state briefly what we hold this breath of life or spirit to be. We are not going to enter philosophically into this question, for that we hold ourselves utterly unable to do. We doubt greatly that man has as yet mastered the properties of that matter which is to a great extent open to the inspection of his senses. We hold him then incapable of analysing that spirit which is imperceptible to sense. But to some extent we hold ourselves capable of knowing from Scripture what the breath of life, or spirit, breathed into man by God, is. We hold it then to be a direct emanation from God himself: to be the divine influence and power proceeding from God to man. We also suppose that whatever this breath of life resides in, must live so long as the breath of life abides in it. We suppose this breath to be the grand vivifying power of God: not only living itself, but giving life. We cannot imagine death to be where this spirit is.

IV. We also suppose that the *effect* of the entering in of this breath of life *differs according to the organisation of the subject upon which it operates*. This does not limit the power of God, for it is he who creates each different organisation, and creates one different from another for the very purpose of producing the difference of effect. Nor does it alter the nature of the breath of life which is in all subjects of its operation the very same, while it produces according to the organisation of each subject a different effect according to the will of God, who both forms and inspires. But it produces in different subjects *a difference of life*, according to the organisation upon which it acts. The breath of life breathed into the organisation of man produced that *human life* of which each man is conscious, and which he understands from this inner consciousness far better than any one can explain to him.

V. Again, we suppose of this breath of life that it may remain in any organisation as long or as short as God who gave it pleases. It may be destined never to leave the organisation upon which it has entered: or it may be appointed to leave it after any periods of time fixed upon by God, from the longest to the shortest. What are the laws which regulate its eternal or its temporary abode in any organisation we believe to be fully known only to God. At all events, we are satisfied that man knows little about them. But according to the



abode in any organisation of the breath of life is its duration. Those in which it abides for ever, such as are the angels of God, are immortal. Those in which it abides for a time only, are mortal, while their period of life may range from ten thousand years, or ten times that, to an hour or a moment, according to the arrangement of Him who gives and takes away. Such in brief we suppose to be that breath of life which God breathed into man, lifeless before its inspiration.

VI. Its introduction into man produced a marvellous effect. *The lifeless figure becomes full of life.* The inanimate frame becomes instinct with *animation*. Man becomes a *living soul*. We are not told that man became the breath of life, or became spirit, which is the same thing. Doubtless, if this were the case, we should have been told so. As we are not told so, we reject the idea. We will find hereafter that Scripture expressly rejects it. Man did not become that breath of life which was breathed into him by God. Man was not transubstantiated: earth did not become spirit. But, in consequence of the inbreathing into him of the divine breath of life, man, before lifeless, became a *living soul*. By this is meant that life, or soul, by the Hebrews called *nephesh*, by the Greeks *psyche*, became, while the breath of life remained in man, the possession or attribute of man. The frame was not lifeless, but full of life: man was not soulless, but was a living soul: each part of him, while it remained connected with the rest, was instinct from life, soul, animation. The brain, the heart, the lungs, the limbs, each sense, and each minutest or least important part, was, in its measure and degree, living. Man became something he was not before: man possessed something he had not before: that something was the life, the soul, the animation, which the inbreathing of the breath of life caused him to have.

VII. We are now able in some degree to see both what man originally was, and what he subsequently became. He was originally earth, as lifeless as any clod of earth. Into this earth enters a divine breath of life. The earth does not cease to be earth, but it becomes, what it was not, full of life, it possesses as its attribute what it did not possess, viz.—a soul. The breath of life was not the soul any more than it was the body, but it was the producer of the soul, as being the quickener of the body. Hence we have man in the condition to which the last act of God brought him, no longer the simple creature that he was. He is still as much as ever earth, and earth is still his only essential property: but he possesses also, so long as God pleases, the breath of life from his Maker, and as a consequence of this possession, and so long as he possesses it, he has, or has become, a living soul.

VIII. Hence we see human nature become what may not improperly be termed *tripartite*. There is still the original man made of earth: into this is breathed a Divine spirit, or breath of life: as a consequence, the original man becomes a living soul, becomes some-

thing he was not before. But while we thus see man become truly tripartite, we must remember this condition is not essentially his. All he can claim as essentially his, is his earthly origin from clay. What he has become depends for its continuance upon God. He has not been changed into divine spirit, he only has this divine spirit dwelling in him at the pleasure of God. It may be withdrawn, and man sinks back to his original. With the withdrawal of the breath of life of necessity is connected the ceasing to be of that living soul which only the indwelling of the divine spirit causes man to be. Man is then no longer a living soul, but the lifeless figure he was at the first. He is dust, and dust only. He has not any longer spirit, and he is no longer living soul. The object of his first creation, life for a purpose, gone, and God does not even think it worth while to preserve the figure, however beautiful, or the organisation, however wonderful and perfect. The organisation is destroyed: the figure crumbles into its essential dust. The death of man produced by the withdrawal of the spirit is followed by the destruction and disorganisation of his form and shape.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE BREATH OF LIFE ; OR, THE NISHMATH CHAJIM.

I. HAVING in our last chapter given a general sketch of man in the perfection of his being, and alluded to his constitution as in a measure become tripartite, we think it will be necessary to say somewhat more of some parts of this constitution of man. Of his body we need not say anything, as probably sufficiently understood. But of the breath of life which God breathed into his body, and of the soul, which as a consequence his body then received, of each of these we think it necessary to say more. The true understanding of human nature will be found of the utmost consequence in our understanding many theological questions. As a false understanding of it has led to many grave theological errors, so the true understanding of it will enable us to retrace our steps to truth.

II. In our present chapter we will lay before our readers what Scripture tells us of the *Breath of Life*. We will also establish the identity of this breath with a term of far more frequent use in Scripture, viz., *the spirit*, sometimes spoken of as man's spirit, and sometimes spoken of as God's spirit. Having established this identity, we will, in our next chapter, enter upon the examination of what Scripture tells us of *the spirit*. Its more frequent mention of a part of the human constitution under this term, will enable us the better to understand all that God intends us to understand about it. We will then devote a chapter to the understanding of the important question of the nature of the human soul.

III. We find the first mention of the Breath of Life (*Nishmath chajim*) in Gen. ii. 7, where we read of its being breathed directly from God Himself into the nostrils of man yet inanimate. From its mention here we should, as we have already stated, infer it to be a direct emanation from Deity.

IV. We will now consider some of the passages in which it is spoken of in Scripture. Before we proceed to the examination of these places, we must first draw the attention of our English readers to the fact that they will not apparently find all the places we refer to justifying our conclusions *in the authorised version*. This, however, is only *apparent*, and arises from the Hebrew word translated "breath" in Gen. ii. 7, not being always so translated in the authorised version. It is, for example, very frequently translated "*spirit*." We can only assure them that all our references are to passages where the Hebrew word translated "breath" in Gen. ii. 7, occurs. We do not think that we will be guilty in any instance of an oversight in this respect, as we have gone over our ground very carefully. The Hebrew scholar can in any case correct us, and we will willingly acknowledge any oversight that we may unwittingly have made.

V. We find, then, in the first place, that the breath of life is an attribute of God Himself. We frequently read in Scripture of "the breath of the Lord." This is plainly that breath of life which we read of in Gen. ii. 7, and which we there considered an emanation from the divine nature itself. Even after it has been given to man, even after it has entered into and formed, as it were, part of his constitution, it is still regarded by God as *his own breath*, properly belonging to Himself. "Who," says Elihu, in the ancient book of Job, here representing the primitive faith of enlightened man upon this subject, "Who hath given God a charge over the whole earth? or who hath disposed the whole world? If He set His heart upon man, if *He gather unto Himself* his spirit and *his breath*." \* Here we find that the breath of life, even while it is in man, is regarded as the property and attribute of God. It is still *his*, not man's: it is still as much as ever His: his, as part of His very essence: His, therefore, to dispose of as He pleases: His to take away from man, as it was His at the first in His bounty to bestow it on man.

VI. We see the same great truth in many other places of Scripture. The breath of life which man possesses is ever spoken of as *God's gift to man*, and not as properly belonging to the essence of man. God ever speaks of Himself as "He that *giveth breath* unto the people" of this earth.† Man is not this breath, but this breath is God's gift to man. Like every other gift it is distinguishable from the party to whom it is given. Man was once without it, and yet was man. But when man was without it, it was residing in the fullness of the Deity Himself.‡

\* Job xxxiv. 4; xxxiii. 14.

† 1 Isaiah xlii. 5.

‡ Job xxxiii. 4.

VII. This breath of the Almighty is that which gives *life* to man, and which bestows upon man his soul.\* “The spirit of God hath made me,” says Job, “and the *breath of the Almighty hath given me life* ;” and in the narrative of the calling back to life of the widow’s son by Elijah, we find that the coming back of the *soul* of the child was dependent on the presence of his *breath*. We thus find the breath of life from God to be at once the source of life to, and the bestower of a soul upon, man, while it is at the same time clearly distinguished from that life and soul which it bestows. The “breath of the Almighty,” which gave Job life, is just as much distinguished from the “life” which it gave, as the “spirit of God” spoken of in the first clause of the verse is distinguished from Job himself whom that spirit made. In fact, as we shall presently see, the “spirit of the Lord” and “the breath of the Almighty” are but different descriptions of one and the same Divine attribute, and it would be therefore as absurd and as erroneous to confound the “spirit of God” with Job, as to confound “the breath of the Almighty” with Job’s life.”

VIII. That this breath of life is only a gift to man, not man himself, and a gift since man’s fall taken from every child of Adam at one time or other, is evident from Isaiah’s significant warning against putting our trust in man. “Cease ye from man,” says the prophet, “*whose breath is in his nostrils*: for wherein is he to be accounted of?”† Is not this to say,—Why trust in a creature from whom the Divine breath of life, which alone distinguishes him from the clods of the valley, is ever trembling in His nostrils, ready to depart? Think not man to be this breath of life. He has it only from God for a little while, and then what is he? The earth that covers him is not more dull and dead. Accordingly death, to which we will devote a chapter further on, is ever described as the departure of the breath of life from the man, who was not identical with it, but only had it as a gift for a while. Life is dependent on its presence. “All the while *my breath is in me*,” says Job, “and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak wickedness.”‡ Here Job identifies his “breath” with the “spirit of God,” speaks of both as a gift from God, and both as distinguished from and to be separated from himself. And then what was he? Dust and ashes! This is yet more fully set forth in a later part of this book, in which a description of death is given us which it would be well indeed for our popular platonising divines to ponder over when they speak of death: “If God set his heart upon man, *if He gather unto Himself His spirit and His breath*; all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again into dust.”§

Before we proceed further we will just draw attention to a most important point in this entire question; and one on which we will further on dwell at greater length, viz.: the fact that all the lower

\* Job xxxlii. 4; 1 Kings xvii. 17—21; Gen. ii. 7.

† Isaiah ii. 22.

‡ Job. xxviii. 3.

§ Job xxxiv. 14.



creatures of God are in their lifetime possessed of the very same "breath of life" which man possesses, and which God breathed into man's nostrils when he made him "a living soul." We are told this important fact in the narrative of the destruction of life by the flood, where we read that "all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man; *all in whose nostrils was the breath of life.*"\* We here find that the "breath of life," whatever it be, whatever be its nature, and whatever its consequences to its possessor, was not the possession of man alone. It belonged to, and was possessed by, all the lower creatures as much as it was by man. The fowl, the beast, the insect, had it breathed into their nostrils as much as man.

X. Now there are a variety of consequences and inferences which follow of necessity from this fact. In the first place, it is quite apparent that the inbreathing into a creature of the breath of life, or the possession by a creature of the breath of life, does not make that creature to become the breath of life. Beasts had the breath of life; but it would not be a true definition of a beast to say that it was this breath of life. The same is true of man. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; but man did not, therefore, become that which was breathed into him. It would not be true to define man as "the breath of life." Another consequence which follows from this is, that the possession of the "breath of life" by a creature does not of itself confer *immortality* upon that creature. Every living creature whatsoever, every animal below man down to the minutest animalcule, had this breath of life resident in them. Yet not one of them was immortal. All without exception were made under the law of death. It follows, therefore, that man's possession of it did not of itself constitute him immortal. He might lose his existence, and cease to be, just as the brutes did, for aught that his possession of the breath of life could effect.

A third consequence of this fact is that the "breath of life" is separable from the creature in whom it may reside. So long as it abides in any creature death cannot come to that creature. The death of all the lower animals at the period of the flood resulted from the separation from them of this breath of life. So in the very same way it was *separable from man*. And here we see again the truth of the first inference which we drew from this most important fact. When a beast died, the breath of life, whatever it was, was separated from it. There was no longer union, but division. A carcase of a beast lay on the ground, the breath of life had left it, and was where you please and what you please. Which of the two was the beast? The carcase was the beast all will allow, though now in a different condition from what it was. Just so of man, so far as his possession of the breath of life is concerned. A dead body lies on the ground,

\* Gen. vii. 21, 22.

the breath of life has left it, and is where you please and what you please. But, according to our analogy, the dead body is the man, the man is not the breath of life; that is something which has left the man. Make what you please of it, endow it with what attributes you like, locate it where you may imagine,—it is not the man. It has left the man behind it. The carcase it has abandoned is he.

XI. Such are the important inferences we are already able to draw from the fact that the possession of the “breath of life” was common to man and beast. This, of course, is only our inference from this common possession. Other facts may hereafter arise to alter our conclusion. We here merely argue from the facts of creation, as brought before us up to this point. Man, because of his possession of the “breath of life,” cannot be defined as the breath of life, or as an immortal creature, or as inseparable from the breath of life. It may be taken from him, and he would then be but a lifeless carcase, unless some other endowment by his Maker hinders such a consequence. His possession of the breath of life does not.

XII. It now only remains for us in this chapter to show that “the breath of life,” spoken of here, and attributed to the lower creatures as much as to man, is identical with “*the spirit*,” which is also said to belong to man; so that we are to consider them as but different names or symbols of one and the same thing. This will be of important consequence in more than one respect. As the term “spirit” occurs much more frequently than the term “the breath of life,” we will be better able to see fully what the breath of life really is. We will be able to correct our previous ideas of it, if it be in any measure incorrect: or we shall be able to confirm the view we have taken, if it be correct; or we shall be able to complete the idea, if it be imperfect. On the other hand, it may possibly be that we may be able to confirm or even to extend our just idea of “spirit” from what we have already seen of its synonym “breath of life.”

XIII. Bishop Horsley, a first-rate Hebrew scholar, and a man of strong intellectual ability, does not hesitate to give on this point the following decided opinion: “None,” he says, “who compares the two passages (viz., Gen. ii. 7, and Eccl. xii. 7) can doubt that ‘the breath of life’ which ‘God breathes into the nostrils of man’ in the Book of Genesis is the very same thing with the ‘spirit which God gave’ in the Book of Ecclesiastes.” \*

There can be, we also think, no doubt of this. Where Horsley is here in error is in identifying *the soul of man with the spirit*; but of this more hereafter. We are now dealing with the question of the identity of “the breath of life” with the “spirit given by God to man;” and here we thoroughly agree with Horsley’s dictum, and for his reason. We doubt if any man of sense could compare together Gen. ii. 7. with Eccl. xii. 7, without allowing that the “breath of

\* Bishop Horsley’s Sermons. Sermon xxxix.

life " in the former is identical with "the spirit" in the latter. They are evidently but different names for one and the same principle of life which God gave to man when He made him a living soul. We will, however, proceed to give full proof from Scripture that they are but different symbols for one and the same thing.

XIV. The parallelism of Hebrew poetry is a feature which has been frequently remarked by Hebrew scholars. The parallelism to which we are now alluding is the frequent occurrence of verses composed of two clauses in which the second clause is the repetition of the sentiment of the first in different language. Now in the single book of Job we find such a number of verses of this kind, in which the breath of life in one clause is plainly used for the spirit in the other clause, that we can have no hesitation in accepting them as synonymous terms. We will mention some of them. "All the while," says Job in one passage, "*my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils.*" In another place, he says, describing death, "If God gather unto himself *his spirit and his breath.*"\* We do not see that it is possible to doubt that in passages such as these, the breath of life is said to be identical with the spirit.

XV. What we have seen from these passages in the Book of Job, we also see from the writings of Isaiah composed on the same principle of poetical parallelism. Thus we read in one place: "Thus saith God the Lord, . . . He that giveth *breath unto the people* upon it (the earth), and *spirit to them that walk therein.*" And in another place he introduces God as saying, "I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for *the spirit* should fail before Me, and *the souls* which I have made."† From the latter passage, indeed, we might suppose that it is the *soul* of man which Isaiah identifies with *his spirit*; but the word here translated "souls" is not the usual Hebrew word for soul, but is the identical word translated "breath" in Gen. ii. 7, and elsewhere. Between the soul and the spirit of man (Hebrew: *nephesh* and *ruach*) there is a clearly marked distinction in the Hebrew Scriptures. We challenge any scholar to bring forward from the entire of the Old Testament a single case of parallelism, such as we have brought forward between "breath" and "spirit." This is more remarkable when we consider that for once the "breath" (*nishma*) is spoken of, the Hebrew term *nephesh*, translated most frequently by "soul," occurs twenty times or more.

XVI. We have then, we consider, established the identity of the "breath of life," breathed into man by God with "the spirit given to him by God." The words are but different names for one and the same principle. With this established, we have but to remark that from the parallelisms above advanced, we have confirmed some of the observations already made by us. We will merely remark, then, that "the breath of life" is indifferently spoken of as belonging to man and as belonging to God. Job calls it both his own breath and

\* Job xxxii. 3; xxiv. 14.

† Isaiah xlii. 5; lvii. 16.

God's breath. It is both in this way. It is man's as given to him by his Maker ; it is God's as proceeding from God, an emanation from the Divine nature, going forth from it when God pleases, returning to it when God pleases ; not the essential property of man, but the essential property of God.

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE SPIRIT OF MAN, OR THE "RUACH" OF THE HEBREWS.

It may appear strange that, in a chapter which treats of the lofty subject of the spirit of man, which, as we shall subsequently see, is in truth far more, being also the Spirit of God, we should commence by turning our readers' attention to the fact that this spirit is not imparted by God solely to the higher order of his creatures, but is shared by him with every creature that is possessed of the smallest share of what is called animal life, even if it does not, as we think by no means improbable, descend to lower things, and become, in the divine wonder-working power, the animating principle of all life of whatever kind, vegetable and mineral as well as animal.

II. It is in this great idea that the truth which is mixed up with the error of Pantheism consists. Every great system of error has some deep truth mixed up with it, to which it owes its currency. There is no falsehood altogether false. Pantheism is not. Its grand idea that God is in everything is a grand truth. Its inference that everything is God, *i.e.*, that there is no personal God, is the deadly poison to which the admixture of truth lends its colour. But we may not deny the truth itself. God is in everything. His Spirit is all-pervading.

III. But our subject at present is not so wide as this. We confine our attention to this one thing, *viz.*: that the very same spirit which is said in Scripture to be in man, is also said in Scripture to be in every creature that is possessed of any amount of animal life. Man cannot claim spirit as his peculiar possession. There is not a beast that roams over the earth, nor an insect that crawls upon it, there is not a fowl that flies in the air, nor a fish that swims in the waters, that does not possess the very same spirit which man possesses as a gift from God. Man, proud of his superiority to them all, their undoubted lord and master, cannot truly deny to the meanest of the living creatures beneath him the possession of that very spirit which exists within himself.

IV. Now this is a very important fact, if it be a fact. Man is prone to deny any community of nature with the lower animals. But science and scientific men are every day more and more establishing a very strong community of nature between the beasts and their



master. We cannot say that we admire the spirit in which too often scientific men pursue this inquiry, namely, as giving them a handle to overthrow the authority of Scripture. For some of their speculations also we entertain a feeling of utter contempt. We do not expect that all the subtle analysis of science, or all the inquiry into the past psychological changes of genus and species, will ever establish the Darwinian dream, that man is the descendant of the mollusc, the lizard, or the ape. But we also warn orthodox theologians that *they* by their philosophical dogmas afford considerable ground for stumbling to scientific men. Their theory of human nature, as in its component parts utterly dissimilar from that of the lower creatures, gives just cause of offence to men who study animal nature, and find beyond any question that there is intimate community where Christian divines teach that there is essential dissimilarity. But we beg to tell men of science that they may not take the views on human nature of popular theology as truly expressive of the teaching of Scripture. Ere they can by their researches and discoveries overthrow any position supposed to be taken by Scripture, they must see whether it is really taken by Scripture, or only fathered upon Scripture by men who have learned from Aristotle or Plato.

V. The denial to beasts of the same spirit which is in man is very common. Theologians of every school almost agree in this. High Church and Evangelical, Nonconformist and Churchmen, generally teach the same on this point. It is with them all a first principal, a something which they suppose a foundation or corner-stone of Christian faith. They think man's future life is somehow bound up with it; that its denial is equivalent to the denial that man has anything to hope for beyond the grave.

VI. Strange that Scripture does not give the smallest ground for this common opinion of divines who are supposed to have learned their theology from Scripture! Stranger still that what they hold up as the corner-stone of the faith is denied by Scripture as plainly as words can deny anything. This we will proceed to show.

VII. We have already, in fact, established it in our last chapter, when we showed the identity of this "spirit" with the "breath of life," and showed that the "breath of life" was the possession of the lower creatures as well as of man. We will, however, here give further and more direct proof from the Word of God.

VIII. If we accept the positive declarations of Scripture upon this point there will be no difficulty, for Scripture does positively declare that beasts have "spirit" as much as man, and that this spirit in both is one and the same. And this is told us in Scripture fully as often as we could reasonably expect it. Man, and not beast, is the subject of Scripture. The beast is but rarely spoken of, and this in evident connection with a higher subject; and yet we find its possession of spirit, and the identity of that spirit with the spirit of man, frequently insisted on. For our part we do not at all wonder at this.

We believe that God did intend in his Word to give us a true account of our nature, so far as it was possible for us to comprehend it, or as its comprehension would be of use. For this purpose a comparison of it with that of beasts where there was resemblance would be perhaps of equal use with the pointing out its distinction where there was a difference. We are not arguing for the identity of nature of man and beasts in all respects. In some, and these the most important respects, as we will hereafter point out, man was immeasurably superior to the beasts at his creation. In some of these he is, even when fallen, superior to them. In all the particulars in which he was superior at creation will redeemed man maintain his superiority in the regeneration. But all this may not blind us to the fact that, if there is distinction of the most important kind between man and beast, so there is also identity of constitution of the strongest nature. One of these points of union and identity is the possession by the beast of the very same spirit which man possessed, as we will now point out.

IX. In Gen. vi. 17, God describes the coming flood to Noah in these words: "Behold I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy *all flesh*, wherein is the *breath* (Hebrew *ruach*, spirit) *of life*, from under heaven." All flesh here comprehends, as Poole states in his commentary, "men, birds, and beasts;" and all these are possessed, according to the words of their Maker, of one and the same spirit of life. If any one were disposed to say that "all flesh" here only comprehends all men, this idea is corrected in the next chapter, where, *speaking only of the lower creatures*, they are said to be possessed of that "breath, or spirit of life," which, in chap. vi. 17, is ascribed to all flesh.\* These two texts, if we had none beside them, would be sufficient to show the teaching of Scripture upon this point. We have, however, others just as plain. In Psalm civ. 29, 30, the inspired Psalmist is describing *the death and the creation of the lower creatures*. Their death he thus describes in verse 29: "Thou (God) hidest Thy face; they are troubled: Thou takest away *their breath* (*ruach*, spirit), they die, and return to their dust." In verse 30, he describes the creation of these creatures thus: "Thou sendest forth *Thy spirit*; they are created."† The Hebrew scholar knows that the original word for "breath" in verse 29, and for "spirit" in verse 30, is the very same. Here as constantly when the words descriptive of human nature and that of the lower animals come to be translated, our translators show the utter confusion into which their Platonic theory of man has involved them. There is not the smallest ground why the Hebrew term *ruach* should not be translated by the same English word "spirit" in both these verses. The philosophical idea of the translators, that beasts were not possessed of a spirit, alone prevented them from doing so.

We do not object to the term being translated "breath," but if it be so translated in ver. 29, it should also be so translated in ver. 30. We

\* Gen. vi. 17; vii. 15.

† Psalm civ. 29, 30.

merely show to the English reader that the term "breath" in verse 29, is of the same sense as the term "spirit" in verse 30, both having the same Hebrew original. This understood, what do these two verses teach us? They teach us that beasts have spirit, and that this spirit is nothing less than *the Spirit of God* breathed into them as He breathed it into man. We will draw attention to one other passage of Scripture upon this point, viz., Ecclesiastes iii. 19-21. The preacher is here expressly comparing together man and beast. "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; *yea, they have all one breath* (Hebrew *ruach*, spirit); *so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast.*" Words cannot be stronger than these. The preacher tells us not only that man and beast both have spirit, but that the spirit of both is one and the same. He is here evidently comparing them in what they had of the highest kind, and nothing could be higher than their possession of that spirit which the Psalms and other Scriptures tell us was indeed nothing less than the spirit of God Himself. Yet in this he tells us that "man hath *no pre-eminence above a beast.*" He tells us the spirit of one was the same as that of the other, and that man could claim no distinction, no pre-eminence whatsoever.

And here the confusion of thought produced by the philosophical ideas of our translators of the Bible appears very strongly. Again, as in Psalm civ. 29, 30, in consecutive verses speaking of the very same subject, they have translated the same Hebrew word by two different English terms. What English reader, who reads of "breath" in verse 19, and "spirit" in verse 21, would suppose that the same Hebrew word stands for both? Yet so it is. What scholar can give a single reason why it should not receive the same translation in both verses? It should. But a false philosophical idea blinded the minds of our translators. They supposed that man had an immortal spirit, *which immortal spirit was*, in their imagination, *the man himself*. They could not, or did not, hold this to be true of beasts. They denied to them the possession of any such spirit, and therefore they translated *ruach* in verse 19 as "*breath*," because in that verse it was stated that man and beast had one and the same *ruach*! We hope the revisers of our translation will attend to this in their revised translation of the Bible. The Platonic notions of the soul, and immortality, and future punishment, have to a most serious extent injured the fidelity of our present Authorised Version. We hope they will not be allowed to mar that which is promised us.

X. And now, with the fact established from Scripture that the lower creatures are possessed of the same spirit which man is possessed of, let us draw a few inferences from this most important fact. The spirit of life, the Spirit of God, is the possession of every thing that is possessed of animal life at all! Such a spirit is the possession of every beast of the field! Yet it would not, therefore, be a just defini-

tion of a beast to say that it was a spirit. It possessed a spirit, and yet it was itself but earth. Neither can we infer from its possession of a spirit that the beast is immortal. This spirit is separable from it, and separated from it in death. In death this spirit is returned, taken back, by him who gave it; and then what is the beast? It has lost its spirit: with that loss it has lost its life, its soul; with that loss it has become nothing but lifeless organised earth: soon destruction will do its work upon this mechanical organisation, and the beast, who once had spirit, and with spirit, life, is resolved into the dust of the earth. We will not forget these inferences when we come to consider the question of man, the higher animal, who yet has no higher spirit than that of the beast, for he could have no higher; for the spirit that gives life to the beast is the Great Spirit in whom all living things live and move and have their being, who preserveth man and beast.

XI. We now proceed to consider "spirit" as the possession of man. Merely that it is his possession, we suppose, need not be shown, as no one, least of all those with whom we here dispute, controverts it. We will, therefore, only refer to some texts which speak of spirit as the possession of man, and then pass on to consider what is said of this spirit, whether in its own nature or in its effects.\* And in the first place we have to remark that that spirit which is in all living men, whether they are good or bad, is expressly said to be the *Spirit of God*. Thus God calls the Spirit which gave life to man, and which He would withdraw when an end was to be put at the flood to that godless generation, *His Spirit*. "*My Spirit*," He says, "shall not always strive with man."† Job is also very clear upon this. In xxxiii. 4, he evidently refers to the creation of man as we find it recorded in Gen. ii. 7. His words are, "*The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*"‡ We suppose no one will doubt but that the "breath of the Almighty" here spoken of is that "breath of life" which we are told in Gen. ii. 7, that God breathed into man, and by which he became a living soul. We also suppose that no one will question what we have already proved, viz.: that the "Spirit of God" in the first clause of this text is identical with "the breath of the Almighty" in the second. But hence it follows that the spirit or breath breathed into man by God is really and truly *God's own spirit of life*. The same truth is taught us in Job xxxiv. 14. Here Job is speaking of man's death, and in what manner it is brought about. It is brought about, Job tells us, by "God gathering unto Himself *his Spirit and his breath.*"§ Hence we gather that that spirit of man which God takes from man in death is in reality God's own Spirit brought back to its eternal source. In accordance with this we gather from Ecclesiastes xii. 7, that the spirit which is in man while alive had a being and existence before it was imparted to man: "Then

\* Joshua xxxviii. 16; Psalm xxxi. 5; Eccl. iii. 19—21.  
Gen. vi. 3.

† Job xxxiii. 4.  
§ Job xxxiv. 14.



shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."\* In death it only returned, went back again, where it was before God had ever formed the dust of the earth into the figure and organisation of man. The spirit which went forth to animate that frame was in God before it went forth, in God from all eternity, of and belonging to God when given to man; in truth an emanation from Deity itself.

XII. The presence of this Spirit of God in man is that which gives him *life*. "The Spirit of God," says Job, "hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty *hath given me life*."† We here learn that it is the presence of this spirit which bestows life on man, while at the same time the spirit is distinct from the life as the cause is distinct from the effect. This is not unimportant to remark. If the life of man was identical with the spirit, it would of course possess all the essential attributes of the spirit. But this is avoided by the account of Scripture, which describes the spirit in man, not as identical with man's life, but as the cause or producer of that life. That which gives life, while most intimately connected with the life, is yet distinct from and distinguishable from it. Hence we may suppose the effect to perish, while the cause of it has not perished. The life of man may perish and become extinct while the spirit that caused it has not. For, the life being produced by the entrance of the spirit into the body, the withdrawal of the spirit from the body causes the life to cease, while it does not cease to be itself, but only ceases to maintain its connection with man. And hence, too, while we do not deny the incorruptibility and *immortality of the spirit in man*, we also see the source of the *precariousness of the life in man*.

Man is not the spirit, but only has the Spirit of God within him. It is therefore a possession which may be withdrawn from him. It is not himself, but a loan from God. God may withdraw the loan, and at once sinks into nothingness that life of man which only depended for its being upon the presence of the spirit. This was a truth which the old and true philosopher Job well knew; and therefore he only pledges himself not to speak wickedness "all the while my breath is in me, and the *Spirit of God is in my nostrils*."‡ He knew his spirit was not his own as his right to keep, but was the Spirit of God in his nostrils, ready to depart at the Maker's pleasure, and then—what was Job? Dust and ashes; a lifeless thing, unable to see, or hear, or speak. In the very same way that the entrance of spirit into man first gives him life, so "the *re-entrance* of this spirit is that which is to *renew his life*." We see this from that remarkable vision of the valley full of dry bones which God showed to Ezekiel. The bones are dry and lifeless which once had life. How is this life to be restored? By God's causing spirit or breath to enter into them again. "I will lay sinews upon you, saith the Lord, and I will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and *put breath*

\* Eccl. xii. 7.

† Job xxxiii. 4.

‡ Job xxvii. 3; vii. 7.

(spirit, *ruach*) into you, and ye shall live."\* The life which had vanished when the spirit left the body is renewed when the spirit enters into it again. The spirit itself had not perished in this interval, but the human life had perished during it. It does not affect our reasoning here whether we consider this whole vision of Ezekiel as a vision of the literal resurrection, such as Paul speaks of in 1 Cor. xv., or as the prediction of a spiritual resurrection, taking its shape and form from the terms properly applicable to the literal resurrection.

XIII. In perfect agreement with our view of the presence of the spirit as giving life to man is the scriptural account of the absence or withdrawal of the spirit as causing his death. On this, however, we will not now enlarge. We will content ourselves here with referring to some passages which prove our assertion.† To the scriptural account of man's death, and what is really meant by it, we propose to devote a future chapter. In it we will compare the account of it as given in God's Word with the perplexed and contradictory accounts given of it by men of large powers of mind, but who have come to the consideration of the question with prejudices and opinions derived from some system of human philosophy.

XIV. We will, however, here say a few words of what becomes of the spirit when man dies. To faith at every period of the world has been given by God as its stay *the hope and promise of a future life*. Such a faith has underlain the life of every man who has sought truly and earnestly to serve God in the midst of an evil world. Without such a faith the life of the just would be an impossibility. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, all lived and died with such a faith: they did not look for transitory promises when they renounced, at the call of an invisible God, the idolatries and sins of a world alienated from Him. They all waited for God's salvation, as Jacob said at the close of his life. They all expected something they had not got here. They all looked upon themselves as strangers and pilgrims, who had a home and a city in another age. In a word they had their heart set upon *another life*. Now to this life the possession of the spirit which had given them life here was essential. Without it they knew they could have no life at all. They therefore knew that if they were to have a new life hereafter, *their spirit must be kept for them to be restored to them again*. Of that spirit itself they could have no apprehension, as they knew it was the Spirit of God. But this was not their thought. It was the *renewed connection of this spirit with themselves* that was in their minds. Without it they knew that they would continue for ever but dust and ashes. Hence when they were truly dying; when they felt themselves to be sinking back to their original earth, *they commended their spirit into the safe keeping of God to keep for them*. They hoped, expected, believed, they would

\* Ezekiel xxxvii. 5, 6, 14.

† Psalm civ. 30; cxxxvii. 17; cxlvi. 4; Job. xv. 30; xxvii. 2; Eccl. viii. 8; xii. 7.

get it back again. Hence the expression of the Psalmist at the prospect of death, "*Into thine hand I commend my spirit,*" a sentiment built upon the faith that he was redeemed of God: "Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth."\* It was because he was redeemed that he was able to commend his spirit into the hands of his God, and to call it *his* at all. God first gave man his spirit in the covenant of creation. Man by sin forfeited his right to this spirit, and in consequence it is at the first death rendered back by every man to the God to whom it belongs. Redemption restores to the redeemed his possession of this spirit for the life eternal. Hence the believer, even when he is rendering up his spirit to God as the forfeit of the original transgression, still regards it as his by virtue of the new covenant of grace in Jesus Christ, and is able to use the very same words that Christ used himself,—"*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*"

XV. Hence we see the exact position of the spirit of every believer during that reign of death which continues unbroken till the resurrection. It has been rendered back to God as the forfeit of original sin. It is, however, pledged to be restored by virtue of the covenant in Christ. It is, therefore, the possession of the believer in death by a promise that cannot be broken. He is allowed, nay commanded, to call it *his*, even in the solemn humbling hour when he is giving it up. His he knows it to be, kept safe for him. The separation is only for a time which, to the sleeper in the dust, shall seem to be but the twinkling of an eye. The hour he knows is coming when *his* spirit shall come back to him; and until that hour comes he knows that it is *his* spirit which he is commending into the hands of the God of redemption.

XVI. Another point of much importance in this whole question is the distinction between the spirit of man and his soul. We will see this more fully brought out hereafter when we come to consider at some length the nature of the human soul. At present we will only say a few words upon this point. With the great majority of Christian thinkers man's spirit and his soul are identical; being, in fact, only different names for the same thing. Of late, however, this identity has been called a deal in question. The rise of the good theory of a tripartite nature of man, of which Mr. Heard† is the learned and zealous advocate, has caused many to question the identity of the spirit with the soul. For our part we quite agree with Mr. Heard in the distinction which he draws, though this point is probably the chief thing in which we are able to agree with him. But with the generality the identity of spirit and soul is an undoubted matter; so much so, that they think to commend the spirit into God's hands might just as well be said to be commending the soul.

\* Psalm xxxi. 5.

† The Tripartite Nature of Man; Spirit, Soul, and Body. By Rev. J. B. Heard, M.A. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

XVII. We will here merely say, that for this identification Scripture not only affords no ground, but has as plainly as possible denied it. We have already seen in our examination of the original creation of man in Gen. ii. 7, that a marked distinction was drawn. The distinction of soul and spirit is spoken of by Paul as being just as definite as the distinction of both from the body.\* We have seen how clearly Scripture identifies the spirit with the breath of life; though the latter is not often mentioned in its passages. But, though the soul is spoken of in numberless places, we have not been able to discover a single one in which such identification is made of the spirit with the soul. But it will, we think, be found in the account which the Scripture gives of the soul how utterly impossible it is to identify them. Things are said of one which are never said of the other, and which are quite incompatible with what is said of it. This must suffice on this point for the present. We will content ourselves now with the expression of our conviction that between the spirit of man and his soul there is an essential difference.

XVIII. And now, before we leave this chapter, we will just make one or two observations which its subjects suggest. We have often stated, and now repeat, our belief that in every great error there is a great truth mixed up. That false popular theology which makes every man, good and bad alike, immortal, is seen from our chapter to have that element of truth which is necessary to give a colour to its deadly falsehood. Every man is not immortal; but every man has the element of immortality within him in his possession of the Spirit of God. It is the confounding of this spirit with the man, or the making this connection between them an indissoluble one, that has converted a great Scriptural truth into a diabolical and pernicious lie. Another observation of the same nature we would make. It is well-known how prevalent the system of Buddhism is, whose primary doctrine is the reabsorption of the Divine element in man back into Goda; and thus virtually the annihilation of all creatures. The Scriptural view of the spirit shows us a great truth in this system. There is such a reabsorption of the Divine element into the Godhead going on perpetually. In all the lower creatures this is, and always has been the universal law. Sin made it to become the law also for fallen man. Redemption has rescued the redeemed from its operation; but the unredeemed are left to it. Here is a great element of truth in the system of Buddha, but it has been poisoned by making that to be a universal which is only a particular law. There are whole orders of beings to whom the law does not apply at all. Redemption has saved the redeemed race of man from its operation. So far is God from wishing to reabsorb all creation into Himself, that Scripture tells us He delights to be ever going forth into the creature imparting a share in His life, to some of a limited period, to others for ever.

XIX. And now it only remains for us to draw very briefly a few

\* 1 Thess. v. 23.



inferences from the doctrine of the spirit as we have seen it to be in Scripture in this chapter. Man possesses in this life a spirit which is in fact the spirit of God. But the beast, as we have seen possesses the very same. Hence we can draw no inference from its possession by man which we are not able to draw from its possession by beasts. We cannot, therefore, define man to be a spirit, because he has a spirit. Neither can we conclude that man possesses the attribute of immortality because he possesses this spirit. Its mere possession by him does not insure his immortality, because it may be possessed for a time only and not for ever. It does not of necessity continue to abide where it has once abided. It may be separated from man as it is separated from beast, unless we have other proof of its inseparability from him besides the mere fact of his having possessed it. And if it is separated from man, what is man then become? Even such as he was before this spirit entered into him. With the departure of this spirit fades away into the grave, into the invisible state of Hades, that life or soul which its entrance alone communicated to man. The dead body is then all that remains of him who once had soul and spirit. Soon corruption exercises its destroying power over this lifeless frame, and man returns wholly to his original dust.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SPIRIT OF MAN, OR THE "PNEUMA" OF THE GREEKS.

I. WE now come to consider the subject of the last chapter as it is brought before us in the pages of the New Testament. That spirit of man, which in the Hebrew Scriptures is called *ruach*, is known in the Greek of the New Testament as *pneuma*.

II. Of the identity of the Hebrew *ruach* with the Greek *pneuma* there is no doubt. It is not, we believe, doubted by any one. The usual, if not the invariable, rendering of *ruach* is by *pneuma* in the Septuagint translation. We also find the same rendering of *ruach* by *pneuma* in the New Testament where passages from the Old Testament containing the former word are quoted.\* We will also see full corroboration of this in the present chapter from perceiving that in the most important respects the very same things are taught us of the *pneuma* in the New Testament which are taught us of the *ruach* in the Old. We therefore think it would be only a waste of our reader's time to dwell further upon this. We assume the identity of the two terms in their leading and proper sense. We will now drop the Greek word *pneuma* and use the English word "spirit,"

\* Luke xxiii. 46, comp. with Psalm xxxi.

merely assuring our readers that wherever we use this word "spirit," we use it as the equivalent term for the Greek term *pneuma*.

III. The identification of these two terms is of very great importance. The New Testament, as all know, is a very much shorter work than the Old. Consequently its terms, and among them the term spirit, do not of course occur nearly so many times as the same terms in the Old Testament. As it is from the occurrence of this term in Scripture that we are enabled to gather the sense in which Scripture uses it, we are, of course, better able to establish its sense from the book in which it most frequently occurs, while it may be that in some particulars we may find a usage for it in the book where it occurs more frequently that we do not find at all in that in which it occurs more rarely. But with this observation we will content ourselves. It is not our purpose in the present chapter to dwell upon any sense or application of the word spirit which we do not find in the New Testament. We merely make the above remarks to enable our reader to fill up his ideas of the subject from its discussion in the last chapter if it should be, or should appear to him to be, imperfectly discussed in this. This our identification of the Hebrew with the Greek term for "spirit" justifies and enables him to do.

IV. Having in our last chapter identified the spirit of life which is in man with the Spirit of God, as being in truth an emanation from God, we will not now dwell any further upon this. But we will see here how the New Testament, as the Old, sets forth this spirit as being by its presence the source of physical life to man, and as causing by its withdrawal his death. The Apostle James lays down this general truth when he says that "the body without the spirit is dead." We find this general truth exemplified in particular instances. Thus our Lord's death is described as His "yielding up the ghost," or spirit. In exact agreement with this we find that the restoration to life, or the recovery from death, is described by the re-entrance of the spirit into the person who was dead. Thus our Lord's raising Jairus' daughter to life is described as "her spirit coming again." And in the same way the resurrection to life of the two witnesses who were slain is described by "the spirit of life from God entering into them."\*

V. The very important truth which we have already drawn from the Old Testament with reference to the location of the spirit of man in death, is also very clearly brought out in the New. It is done so in the case of our blessed Lord and His martyr Stephen. Thus, when the hour came for our Lord to die for His sheep, we read that He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:" and precisely so when Stephen is stoned and dying, we read that he called upon Jesus and said: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."† We thus see that in death the spirit which had been the source of life to men, returns to God who gave it, and is commended trustfully by each believer as he

\* James ii. 26; Matt. xxvii. 50; John xix. 30; Luke viii. 55; Rev. xi. 11.

† Luke xxiii. 46; Acts vii. 59.

dies into the hands of his God. (An expression which is *never* used of the soul of man is thus frequently used of his spirit, viz., its commendation into the hand and safe-keeping of God at the time of death.)

VI. And here it is natural to observe that it is *only believers* of whom we read in Scripture that they in death commend their spirit into the hand of God. We will venture to go farther and to say that it is only believers who are *warranted* to do this. This may require a little explanation. From Eccl. xii. 7, and other passages, we gathered that the spirits of all men alike, utterly irrespective of their character and relation to God, went back to God in death. This, however, is not only quite consistent with the fact that it is only believers who are warranted to commend their spirits to God, but is also required by the relation of these latter to God. When a thing that belongs to us is commended to the care of another, it is so commended *with a view to its restoration*. Now it is only the believer who is warranted in calling the spirit *his*. In all men now this spirit is forfeit to God. Although in the resurrection of the wicked this spirit must for a while give to them life, still it is given to them only for the purpose of judgment, and is at their resurrection as much forfeit to God as it now is, theirs not being the resurrection to life eternal. They have no right therefore now or in the hour of death to call the spirit theirs, seeing it is forfeited, and therefore no right to commend it into the hand and safekeeping of God. In their case it is destined permanently to return to God. But with the redeemed it is quite different. The spirit, which they as all others sprung from Adam had forfeited, is restored to them through Christ. They part with it for a time to receive it back for ever. It is, therefore, theirs by covenant. In death they are entitled to regard it as their possession. They therefore place it solemnly and trustfully in the hands of their Father and their Saviour in the sure and certain hope of receiving it back in the morning of resurrection, to be to them the source of that everlasting life, which will then be bestowed upon them, and is now promised and pledged.

VII. And from abundant passages of the New Testament we also gather that very important truth which we have already learned from the Old that the spirit, even the spirit of the believer, though pledged to belong to him for ever, is yet not regarded as identical with the man to whom it belongs. This is a most important feature in this whole inquiry. The generality of Christian teachers have fallen into the error that the spirit when separate from the body is regarded as the man. Hence John Wesley's proud boast—too proud for man—"I am an immortal spirit." But the New Testament, equally with the Old, cuts off this boast, by expressly teaching that the spirit, whether man's for a time, or man's for ever, is *not man*. Thus the death of Jesus is described: "*Jesus yielded up the ghost,*" or *spirit*.\* Here Jesus as a man is distinguished from the spirit which

\* Matt. xxvii. 50.

was in Him. He gave it up: He was separated from it: He was therefore not that which was separable and separated from Him. When the spirit had gone to God, Jesus, the man Jesus was left, without the spirit, yet still Himself. The spirit of Jesus was not Jesus Himself. We are not here straining words, but merely taking them in their natural sense. The Scripture says, "Jesus gave up His spirit:" popular theology would say, with Plato and Wesley, "Jesus, a spirit, gave up His body." But such language is never met with in Scripture. We will show this same truth from other parts of the New Testament, and prove that our interpretation of the passage in Matthew is the interpretation which inspiration puts upon it. Jesus is dead: His spirit is gone back to God: His lifeless body hangs upon the cross. Which of the two is Jesus? The dead body, according to the Word of God. "*When they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead.*"\* The lifeless body is called Jesus by His apostle John, and not the spirit which had left Him. In the very same way the angels speak of Jesus to the women who came to anoint the dead body. When they entered within the tomb they found not Him whom they sought. Why? *Because He had left the tomb.* "Why," said the angels to them, "why seek ye the living among the dead? *He is not here but is risen.*"† Thus we see that in the judgment of the angels that which lay lifeless in the tomb of Joseph *was Jesus Himself.* He had been there during three days, but he was there no longer. He ceased to be there when He rose from the rocky floor and departed from the tomb. It was not His spirit with God that was Jesus: it was the lifeless corpse. Many may not like this language, but it is the uniform language of both Old and New Testament. It is the very view which our Lord Himself would impress upon us. It is the evening of the day of His resurrection. He appears to His disciples as they are discoursing to one another. "They are terrified and affrighted," we read, "and supposed that they had seen *a spirit.*" And what does Jesus reply to them? He said unto them, . . . "Why do thoughts arise in your minds? *Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself;* handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have."‡ We here see the mind of Christ. He would not be *Himself* unless He was in the body: the idea that He was a spirit was quite foreign to the mind of the true man, Christ Jesus.

VIII. And here it becomes us from that fuller account given of Him who is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, to view Jesus in His death as detailed to us in various parts of the New Testament; and see whether that which is spoken of Him does not bear out all that we have gathered of the nature of man from God's Word. It will not be disputed by any one who takes our Lord's words as true, that during the three days of His death "the Son of Man was in the heart of the earth," as truly and as really as "Jonas was three days

\* John xix. 30.

† Luke xxiv. 6.

‡ Luke xxiv. 37—39.



and three nights in the whale's belly."\* Yet there was a marked difference between their condition in this state. Jesus was dead: Jonah was alive; Jesus had commended His spirit into God's hand, and it was with His Father: it still animated the prophet. And yet *the Son of Man* was truly and really, not figuratively, or in mere popular speech, *in the heart of the earth*. And so, as we judge of Jesus, we judge of all men. *What lies within in the heart of the earth is the man*. The *spirit* which has gone to God is *not the man*. It once belonged to the man. In the case of the believer it is pledged to him as his for ever. But for all that it is not man, whether possessed for a time only or for ever.

IX. And now we will only refer to a consequence which follows from this; and which we have already concluded from separate and independent evidence of Scripture, viz., the real and proper *distinction between spirit and soul*. In popular language they are confounded: in Scripture never. Intimately connected, they are distinct and different things. This we see from the case of our Lord. In death His spirit was with His Father. Where was His soul? In Hades. We will hereafter consider particularly what the soul is, and what Hades is. But our particular conclusion here is not at all affected by the consideration of their nature. Whatever the soul of Jesus was, it was in Hades; whatever Hades is, it is within this earth. The soul of Christ, then, which was in Hades, was distinct from His spirit which was with His Father, and what was true of His spirit and soul is also true of all spirits and souls; they are distinct from one another: always separable, and in death separated. And in agreement with this, Paul, when he would apparently embrace the entire constitution of man in its perfect condition, calls it "body, soul, and spirit," as being each distinct from, and distinguished from the other.†

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SOUL OF MAN, OR THE "NEPHESH" OF THE HEBREWS.

I. IN discussing the question of the soul, we come to a question of great importance, and one which has engaged the attention of mankind at every period. The most opposite theories, it is well known, have been held upon it in the schools of philosophy and theology. By some it has been supposed identical with the spirit; by others to be distinct from it. By some it has been supposed to be the peculiar

\* Matt. xii. 40.

† 1 Thess. v. 23.



attribute of man; by others to be shared with him by every animal. By some it has been thought to be in its own nature immortal, and so incapable of death from any source whatever; by others it has been supposed to have been created by God with an inalienable immortality, so that, without denying the power of God to destroy it, it is yet certain that He never will, and that no other power can. By others it is thought in death to pass into the same lifeless condition as the body; while others have thought that it survived the death of the body for some time longer or shorter, and at length ceased to exist. By some it has been thought to have had an existence before the body; by others to come into existence simultaneously with it. By some it has been thought to be an entity, or person by itself, so that on the dissolution of the body it was still a true person, capable of all the thoughts and feelings of a living and reasonable being; by others it has been thought to be rather a quality of a person, so that on the dissolution of that person it of necessity ceased to be. By some it has been thought to be the true and proper man, of whom the body was an attribute, or circumstance, without which it could subsist for a time or for ever; while others have supposed the body rather to be the man of whom the soul was an attribute, in possession of which the man was alive, and deprived of which he was dead. Amid all this variety and contradiction of thought the one source to which we look with perfect confidence is the Bible, in which He speaks of the soul who is its Maker. In the Old Testament Scriptures we have the nature of the soul referred to in numberless passages. From that book alone, therefore, we might expect clear and sufficient evidence upon this question. As it appears to us, all that can be said upon it has been said over and over in the Old Testament. There are points on which the Old Testament is confessedly obscure: but this is not one of them. In clear, decided terms, not darkly or with stammering lips, it speaks of the soul of man from its earliest to its latest page. But at the same time that we are of this opinion we will not refrain in a succeeding chapter from drawing attention to what is said on this subject in the New Testament, where the soul or *psyche* of the Greeks is equivalent to the soul or *nephesh* of the Hebrews. From these two sources together as much information as God is pleased to give us upon this subject will be derived, nor do we believe that a single particle of light can be thrown upon it other than that derivable from Scripture. Divines and philosophers, we fully believe, have succeeded in investing the whole subject with obscurity, and in connecting it with a vast amount of falsehood: we do not think they have ever spoken a single truth about it which may not be found in the Word of God. What is more: we believe that if we would attain to so much of truth as is attainable upon this question, we must discard from our minds the theories of men, whether those men have been called heathen philosophers or Christian theologians, and sit down as little children to learn from God

what He is pleased to tell us of ourselves, and what He only can with infallibility speak of.

II. We will commence our chapter upon the nature of the soul as we commenced that upon the nature of the spirit, by showing from Scripture that whatever soul be, or whatever its nature and attributes, the Scriptures attribute the possession of soul *just as much* to all the lower creatures as they attribute its possession to man. Man's proud boast that he alone has soul, and that its possession by him is his essential difference, or one of his essential differences from all those living creatures which are unquestionably below him in the scale of creation, fades away and disappears utterly when we come to consult upon this point the oracles of God.

III. We must say that in an inquiry of this kind an English reader meets with great difficulties in consequence of grave faults of translation of which the translators of our Authorised Version have been guilty; not through any wilful fault, but in consequence of their coming to the translation of the Bible thoroughly imbued with Platonic views of human nature in general and of the soul in particular. They all believed that the soul was a person dwelling within the human body, wholly unaffected save in its connection with the body by death, possessed of an inalienable immortality. Adopting widely different ideas of the nature of the lower animals, supposing them in their nature capable of death and dying, they were of necessity obliged to deny to them the possession of such a soul as they supposed man to be possessed of, or, rather, to speak with more propriety, to consist of. Hence, when they found the Hebrew term *nephesh*, generally by them translated soul when spoken of man, applied to the lower creatures, they could not give it a similar translation; but translated it by some other term. A notable instance of this occurs in the translation of the first and second chapters of Genesis. The Hebrew scholar knows that when Moses, in Genesis i. 20, 21, speaks of the nature of the lower order of animals, and when in Genesis ii. 7, he speaks of the nature of man, *the inspired writer used the very same Hebrew terms of both one and the other*. Each fish, and fowl, and creeping thing, and beast is called in the Hebrew a *nephesh chajah* as much as man who was given the rule over them. But this was in its apparent bearing wholly inconsistent with the philosophical ideas of the translators. They considered it dangerous that the similarity of description should appear in the English version which Moses did not consider it dangerous to exhibit in the Hebrew original. Hence they must guard God's Word from its supposed dangerous language by translating *nephesh chajah* very differently in the first chapter of Genesis, where it is applied to the lower creatures, from what they translated it in the second chapter, where it is applied to man. Hence the Hebrew words which they translate by "creature that hath life," and "living creature," in Genesis i. 20, 21, they translate "by living soul" in Genesis ii. 7. The striking difference of expression which

appears in the English version is utterly absent from the Hebrew original. A gross, though unintentional fraud has been committed against the English reader. He is misled in his searching of the Scriptures. He is put on a false scent. The Greek translation of the Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate, true to the duties of the translator, has given the very same Greek and Latin words in their translation of the Hebrew terms, whether applied to the lower animals or to man. Our English translators have supplied us with a commentary of their own instead of a translation, a comment we will here add utterly alien to truth.

IV. But the result of this mistranslation is to lead astray the English reader who trusts to it. This is not the only instance which occurs of the thing in reference to this question. The same Hebrew word is throughout the Old Testament translated according as the *Platonic notions* of the translator led him to think it ought to be translated. Plato had a considerable hand in the translation of King James' Bible. The Hebrew word *nephesh* is translated "creature," "soul," "life," &c., just as squared with the notions of men who carried Plato's philosophy into their noble work of the translation of Scripture. We affirm that a grave injury has been done to the English reader, and a gross wrong to God's Word, by conduct such as this,—an injury and a wrong which we trust will not be repeated in that new version of Scripture into English which we are promised. And while upon this subject we would just say that a grave duty rests upon those who have the management of this much required work of revision that there should be among the revisers one or more men who do not accept Plato as an infallible authority upon the question of human nature, or rather one phase of Plato's doctrine; for that great philosopher was by no means consistent with himself in all his statements. With these observations we turn to our subject, merely informing our English readers that in our statements of the soul in this chapter we invariably speak of the Hebrew word *nephesh*, though the variety of its translation in the various passages to which we refer in the Authorised Version might lead them to suppose a very different thing.

V. We begin, then, by saying that so far from the popular idea of soul as the peculiar possession of man, Scripture teaches us that it is just as much the possession of all the lower creatures. The Hebrew Scriptures tell us that all these possess that *nephesh* which is usually translated by the English word soul. Fürst, perhaps the highest existing authority on the Hebrew language, in his "Concordance" defines *nephesh* as the soul, by which an animal lives, both of man and brute" (*anima, quâ animal vivit, tum hominis tum bruti*). No one, indeed, having the smallest acquaintance with the Hebrew Scriptures, could say anything else. In no less than five verses of the first and second chapters of Genesis are all the lower creatures of God said to be "living souls," the expression in



the Hebrew being the very same which, when spoken of man, is thus translated in Genesis ii. 7. Again, in the Book of Leviticus, all the fishes of the sea are said to be "living creatures," or "living souls." Again, in a passage of the Book of Numbers, even our Platonic translators could not avoid using the English word "soul" of the beast as much as of men, where the Lord's tribute is reckoned as "*one soul of five hundred, both of the persons, and of the beeves, and of the asses and of the sheep.*" Birds and beasts are both said in the Book of Proverbs to be possessed of soul, and to be capable of losing it; though here our translators have given to the Hebrew term the translation into "life."\* Here is a very considerable array of texts, considering how little of Scripture is occupied with the lower creatures, which prove that whatever is meant by that Hebrew word which is commonly translated "soul," is possessed by the lower creatures as much as by man.

VI. We will draw a few inferences which occur to us from this important fact. All the lower animals, so long as they continue in existence, are said to be possessed of soul, or to be living souls. Yet they are none of them immortal. They all at one period or other cease to exist. In ceasing to exist they lose their soul, they cease to be living souls. It is never supposed that their soul is a second internal animal which, when the outward gross frame becomes lifeless, flits away somewhere else, and enjoys life in some other scene. Thoughts such as these are entertained by the poor Indian who fain would hope that

"transported to yon equalsky,  
His faithful dog will bear him company."

But the fancy of the Indian has not yet possessed the theological brain of Christendom. It is still commonly held that the lower creatures really die when they seem to us to die. There is for no part of them survival. It may be found difficult to define what is the life or soul which they possess, but it is all but universally conceded that in their death this life or soul departs, ceases to be, perishes. They have souls, and they are living souls; yet they, whatever be their organisation and nature, do, in their entirety, cease to be or to exist. The possession of a soul does not imply immortality on its own part or on that of the creature who possesses it.

VII. And now we come to man and his soul. Man, in life, has a soul. Man, in life, is a living soul. We need not quote Scripture for this, as it is affirmed in a thousand places, and our translators have not been at any pains to hide it. All we want to know is what is intended by having a soul, or being a living soul, in the case of man. We have no hesitation in saying that *the very same thing is meant in man's case that is meant in the case of the lower creatures.* We may have difficulties of definition in one case, but not more or different from what we have in the other. Physiologists, and naturalists, and

\* Gen. i. 20, 21, 24, 30; ii. 19; Lev. xi. 10; Num. xxxi. 28; Prov. vii. 23; xii. 10.

medical men, and divines may be perplexed in their accounts of the soul or life; but we have no hesitation in saying that what it is in the case of the lower creatures that very same thing it is in the case of man.

VIII. Any other idea would be to do a violence to the language of Scripture, which would thoroughly shake our confidence in it. Thus, in the first two chapters of Genesis, Moses, in his account of the creation of the lower creatures and of man, uses one of his most important terms no less than six times. *The very same Hebrew phrase, nephesh chajah*, which is translated variously as "living creature" or "living soul," is used by Moses in his account of man and beast. Of the latter it is affirmed five times, of the former once. He uses it of the lower creatures before he applies it to man: he uses it again of them immediately after he has applied it to man. He never gives the smallest hint that he uses it of one in any sense different from what he uses it of the other. If, then, we are to interpret the language of Scripture in the same way that we interpret the language of any other book, we can only arrive at the conclusion that men are "living souls" in the very same sense that the lower creatures are. We do not say that there is no difference between men and beasts: we know that there is much. But what we here say is, that this difference is not brought out by saying that man has a soul, or that man is a living soul: for the very same phrase is used of every animal below him as of him. The distinction between man and beast must be ascertained from other sources than this.

IX. Now this facilitates our inquiry very much. At its very outset it enables us to dispose of the entire Platonic theory about souls and their nature. The soul of man is not the man himself, any more than the soul of the beast is the beast. The soul of man is not a second entity, a second person, a second inner ethereal man existing within an outer and grosser man, any more than it is a second entity or ethereal beast within beast. The soul of man is not itself essentially or inalienably immortal, nor does it confer immortality in man's case more than in that of the beasts. All these ideas are seen to be but human fancies painfully wrought out of the crucible of the human brain, but having no real foundation, the moment we learn from Scripture that beasts have souls, and are living souls, as much as men. If we would be consistent, and affirm all this of man and of his soul, we must adopt more than we have hitherto adopted, and become Pythagorean philosophers, and suppose that the lower creatures are what the Platonist makes man. If we refuse to lower our idea of the human soul from its Platonic level, we must raise the bestial soul to a level with it. But we will now show from Scripture that the lowering process is that which we must adopt.

X. The simple and proper meaning of the Hebrew word *nephesh*, when applied to the lower creatures, is *life, animal life*. The soul of the beast is nothing else than the life of the beast. We affirm that the soul of man is nothing more or less than that animal life which he shares



in common with the beasts. We consider that we have already proved this in paragraphs vii.-ix., but we will proceed to give further proof.

XI. Gesenius, in his Hebrew Dictionary, gives the primary meanings of the Hebrew *nepesh* as "breath," "life, the vital principle in animal bodies." Fürst, as we have already seen, gives a similar definition. These are the highest authorities on the Hebrew language. The usage of our own translators of the Authorised Version confirms this very strongly. Let us remember they all held the Platonic notion of the soul as a sort of second inner ethereal immortal man, dwelling in a house or tabernacle called the body. Hence they most frequently translate the Hebrew *nepesh* by "soul," meaning mostly thereby their philosophical fancy. But in spite of their bias, they are constantly obliged to translate the word by "life," i.e., animal life, because the word "soul," *understood as they understood it*, would be wholly unsuitable. We, who understand by "soul" animal life, do not care much, or at all, by which term it is translated; but it is quite a different matter with those who suppose the soul to be an immortal entity or person. Hence our Platonic translators of the Scriptures are constantly obliged to *vary their translation*: they are constantly compelled to use the equivalent of "life," because "soul," in *their sense*, was inadmissible. We will give an example of this. In Proverbs xii. 10, we read, "A righteous man regardeth *the life of his beast*."\* The word here translated "life" is that which is ordinarily translated "soul." According to our views, it is perfectly immaterial, whether it is here translated by "soul" or "life," seeing both mean one thing. But not so with our Platonic translators. According to them "the soul" was an immortal person, and beasts had no soul; and so they must needs here use the term "life." What they have done here they have been obliged to do in numberless instances, of which we give some below.† Despite their Platonic views, they are compelled to give "animal life" as a true and proper sense for that word which they generally translate by a term which they suppose to mean something infinitely higher in meaning than "animal life." Just as if a word can be said to have *for its primary sense* two meanings wholly different from each other! But this violates the laws of language. The secondary senses of words often depart widely from the primary; the primary sense is almost invariably one, and certainly never allows of two contradictory meanings.

XII. We will now give some instances from Scripture, in order to show that the primary and proper meaning of the Hebrew *nepesh*, usually translated "soul," is animal life. We have an instance of this in 1 Kings i. 12, when Nathan gives Bathsheba counsel how she "may *save her own life (nepesh) and the life of her son Solomon*." This might just as well have been translated, "save her own soul,"

\* Prov. xii. 10.

† 2 Chron. i. 11; Prov. i. 19; vi. 26; 1 Kings i. 12; Lam. ii. 19; Jonah i. 14; 1 Sam. xxii. 23; Esth. vii. 3.

and shows us the simple sense of what is meant throughout Scripture by the phrase "*to save the soul*." Again in the book of Job, we read of men, beasts, and fishes, that "the soul of every living thing is in the hand of the Lord." It is quite plain that here "animal life" is meant by "the soul," for beasts and fishes have no other soul but animal life. In the same way the heathen sailors, when about to throw out Jonah into the sea, use the word *nephesh* as simply expressive of animal life, when they pray to God that they may not "perish for *this man's life*." Further instances of this kind are needless. The usage of Scripture shows beyond a question, that its primary sense for "soul" is animal life.

XIII. Having for its primary sense the meaning of "life," the Hebrew *nephesh*, or soul, comes naturally to signify the person who is possessed of this life so long as he possesses it. No one, we believe, doubts this sense, and we therefore content ourselves with giving below references to some Scriptures in which it is so used.\* From this usage of the word it sometimes comes to signify a *dead person*; but this, we contend, is only done when the adjective "dead," is joined to it.† Even in face of such authorities as Fürst and Gesenius, we more than doubt that the Hebrew *nephesh*, or soul, *by itself and unaccompanied by a qualifying adjective*, ever means a dead body or corpse. Num. v. 2, and Levit. xxii. 4, are appealed to as instances where it does, but we do not see our way to accept the interpretation. As this, however, does not bear upon our present question, we will not occupy our readers' time with its discussion. The view that *nephesh*, or soul, does sometimes by itself mean a corpse, is against, not in favour of, the theory we here contend against. We only mention it to express our opinion, which is that the Hebrew *nephesh* primarily signifies "animal life," then readily comes to signify "a living person," and finally comes, when accompanied by the adjective "dead," to signify that person when dead.

XIV. We now pass on to consider the important question of the mortality or immortality of the soul. Certainly this question, which now agitates the mind of the Church, could never have arisen if men had only learned their philosophy of human nature from the Bible. Our theological and philosophical books are replete with arguments for the immortality of the soul, but when we come to Scripture, we fail to find a single passage which states it. Some may suppose it to be *inferred* from certain passages, but no man, of all the men who have read the Bible from beginning to end, can say that he has ever seen it stated in Scripture that the soul is immortal. But this is not all. *The very opposite* is asserted in Scripture of the souls of specified classes of mankind. This we will now proceed to show.

XV. We will only draw particular attention to a few passages on this subject. If we were to draw attention to all the passages of

\* Gen. xlv. 18; Ex. xii. 15; Lev. iv. 2; v. 15; vii. 27; Esth. ix. 31; Isa. xlvii. 14.

† Num. vi. 6; Lev. xxi. 11.

Scripture which tell us that the soul of man is mortal and dies, we should swell a moderate volume into a folio. We will then draw our readers' attention first to a passage in Leviticus, in which the death of man and beast is spoken of in the very same terms, and in which the death of both is said to be produced by the smiting or killing of their souls. As is too usual, our translators have disguised the original Hebrew from their Platonic predilections. The passage in our Authorised Version runs thus: "He that *killeth any man* shall surely be put to death; and he that *killeth a beast* shall make it good."\* The English reader might pass over this as unimportant in the present question, but a glance at the Hebrew shows it to be of great consequence. The Hebrew is thus literally translated: "He that *killeth the soul of a man* shall surely be put to death, and he that *killeth the soul of a beast* shall make it good." Here the nature of death is described. It is said, as in Eccles. iii. 19, to be the very same in man as in beast; and it is also said to consist in killing the soul (*nepesh*) of each. The mortality of the human soul is here taught, beyond any question, by God himself, for the words are spoken by him. In Deuteronomy xix. 6 we have a similar expression, so far as relates to the death of man. The Hebrew words, which are in our version translated "slay him," are literally "kill a soul."† Phrases of this kind abound in the Hebrew Scriptures, but our translation hides the expression from the English reader.‡ The Greek of the Septuagint version will generally be found to carry out faithfully the expression of the Hebrew, as does also, though not so commonly, the Vulgate Version. Sometimes our translators allow the literal force of the Hebrew to appear in our translations. Thus we read that Joshua "utterly destroyed all the souls" that were in the various cities of Canaan taken by him.§ And in Leviticus God himself uses the same language: "Whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people."|| We may not in the face of such Scriptures deny the fact that in death the soul is really and truly destroyed. Abraham's expression to Sarah, that his "*soul should live*" if she pretended to be his sister, implies his belief that, if she did not, his *soul would die*.¶ And the same truth is fully brought out in the well-known wish of Balaam, when literally translated, "*let my soul die the death of the righteous*."\*\* In his time of anguish, Job tells us that "*his soul chose death* rather than life,"†† meaning plainly that the condition of unconsciousness in which his soul then would be was preferable to living woe. The description given by David of the condition of the soul when separate from the body is a description which is utterly inconsistent with its possession of any conscious life more than the body is possessed of in the grave.

\* Lev. xxiv. 17, 18; Prov. vii. 23.

† Deut. xix. 6.

‡ Num. xxxi. 19; Deut. xxii. 26; xxvii. 25.

§ Josh. x. 28, 30, 39.

|| Lev. xxiii. 30.

¶ Gen. xii. 13; Jer. xxxviii. 17—20.

\*\* Num. xxiii. 10.

†† Job vii. 15.



His prayer to God is, "*Deliver my soul: oh, save me for thy mercies' sake.* For in death there is no remembrance of thee: *in Hades who shall give thee thanks?*"\* Here he describes the state of his soul in Hades as, so far from being in any glorious or happy state, absolutely as incapable of thanking God for anything as it is for the dead body in the grave to remember former things. That the soul dies is intimated in Proverbs and elsewhere, where it is said, that wisdom and discretion are the *preservation of its life*.† Job tells us that in death *the soul goes to the grave*,‡ an expression wholly inconsistent with its continuing to live. In the thirty-third Psalm we are expressly told that the souls even of God's people are exposed to death; and in another psalm that the soul "is not spared from death;"§ while the final end of the wicked in hell, which we know from the entire evidence of Scripture to be the utter extinction of their entire being, is described as the death of the sinful soul.¶

XVI. Now what is to be said of passages such as we have referred to, and which could be readily multiplied ten times over? What do they teach us as to the immortality of the soul? Do they not with all authority teach us that any such doctrine is a mere human conceit, to be rejected, no matter what array of great names are paraded for it? Let us remember that we have in the Hebrew language no other word but *nephesh* for that conception which we speak of as the soul. And of this soul, this *nephesh*, Scripture tells us, in passages of every variety of expression, that when man dies this soul of his dies with him. Let us then suppose it to be what we will, yet this we must accept, if we accept God's word, that the soul, which Plato tells us is immortal in the case of every man, God tells us dies in the case of every man. It does not survive the body: both together cease to exist, to live together again when the spirit of life re-enters the body and reproduces the soul within it.

XVII. And here we would particularly warn the upholders of the scriptural truth of life and immortality only in Christ, to beware how, by explaining away the natural force of the many Scriptures which teach that the soul dies in the first death, they greatly weaken their own argument when they come to insist that the second death means the true and real extinction of the entire man. Scripture speaks of it simply as *death*.¶ If the first death is consistent with man's in fact not dying, but continuing to live in regard of his most important part, whose survival again may be supposed to imply the restoration of the body to life, it seems plain that the common idea of the first death militates gravely against our view of what is intended by the second.

XVIII. A very important feature of our inquiry, and one which will not take us long to determine, is the locality of the soul during

\* Ps. vi. 4, 5.

† Prov. iii. 22: Isa. lv. 3:

‡ Job. xxxiii. 22.

§ Ps. xxxiii. 19; lxxviii. 50.

¶ Ezek. xviii. 27.

¶ Rom. vi. 23; viii. 13.

the period of death, *i.e.*, during that period, of whatever length, which intervenes between the time a man dies and the time he rises from the dead. With one unbroken voice, from beginning to end, the Old Testament declares that the souls of all men, good and evil, are in a place which it calls Sheol, and which the Septuagint and New Testament translate into the Greek equivalent of Hades. What Hades is we will not now inquire, farther than to say that, beyond any doubt, it is some place within this earth. In another chapter we will inquire whether it is distinct from, or equivalent to, the grave. Such an inquiry is as yet unnecessary. Here it is enough to say that the Old Testament teaches us that all souls go on death to Hades, and that this Hades is within the earth. We do not consider that it will be necessary in proof of this to do more than refer, at the bottom of the page, to some places of Scripture which affirm it.\* We would merely warn the English reader that, when he turns to these passages, he will find a great variety of renderings which would perplex him if he was not informed that they are one and all translations of the same Hebrew word, Sheol, or of its synonym in Greek, Hades. The truth is, that no reader of the Authorised Version can be more perplexed at this than were the translators themselves. In their utter confusion of mind as to the nature of Hades, they alternately translate it by "death," or "the grave," or "hell," as the supposed exigencies of each case required it. The result is that the English reader is utterly unable to judge for himself in this important question. We earnestly hope that the revisers of our translation will attend to this. As the invariable translation of the Hebrew Sheol in the Old Testament, we would recommend its Greek equivalent, Hades. If this is not approved of, we would suggest that the word Sheol may be left *untranslated*. It will soon become a familiar word, and the English reader will be able to judge from its use in Scripture what Scripture really intended him to learn about it. But we would prefer the rendering of Hades, which the New Testament authorises,† and which is its invariable rendering in the Septuagint version.

XIX. There is undoubtedly a very intimate connection between the soul of man and the spirit. We have already seen this from our examination of the creation of the living man by God, in Gen. ii. 7. It was the inbreathing of the breath of life, *i.e.*, of the spirit, which produced within man his soul, or made him become a living soul. Soul had no existence in man until the spirit entered into him. Then it was produced. While the spirit remains in man it is evident that the soul continues: and equally evident it is that when the spirit departs, the soul returns to its original non-entity. The existence of the soul, as it was produced by the presence of the spirit, so must always depend upon that presence. With the spirit it comes, remains

\* Deut. xxxii. 22; Job vii. 9; Ps. lxxxix. 48; vi. 5; xvi. 10; Eccl. ix. 10; Acts ii. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 55.

† Acts ii. 31.



and vanishes. With the departure of the soul man ceases to be a sentient being. He becomes like the clods of the valley. And this vanishing of the soul, and departure of all sense and thought from man, is consequent essentially on God's taking back the spirit which he gave. "Man's breath or spirit," says the psalmist, "goeth forth : in that very day his thoughts perish."\*

XX. But while the close connection of the soul and spirit is as certain a thing in the constitution of man, as it is in that of the lower creatures of God, it is equally certain, and an important point to insist upon, that soul and spirit are two perfectly distinct and distinguishable things. Between the cause and its effect, while there is the closest of connections, there is also a perfect distinctness. The heat which sets fire to a barrel of gunpowder is distinct from the explosion which it produces. There lay hid in the gunpowder, from the nature of its composition by the manufacturer, a certain power or quality which would for ever lie dormant unless a certain power, that of heat, stimulated and brought out its latent quality. Just so with man. God so made his bodily organisation of heart, and brain, and member, that all possessed within them a latent capacity of certain action on the application of a certain power, viz., the spirit. The application of this produces this in man, *i.e.*, calls forth within him his soul, or makes him a living soul, capable of certain thoughts, feelings, actions. Hence the moral responsibility lies, not with the spirit, but with the soul, *i.e.*, with the living man.

XXI. But close as is the connection between spirit and soul, they are two distinct things. This will readily appear from the few considerations following. When we were comparing the breath of life with the spirit with a view to their identification, we saw how the manner in which they were spoken of in the parallel clauses of Scripture poetry completely identified them, although the breath of life is spoken of comparatively in but few places of Scripture. Now, while both spirit and soul are mentioned in a very great number of places, they are not once, that we are aware of, and we have, we believe, examined every passage in which they occur, mentioned in such a way. Again, throughout the entire of the Old Testament the Hebrew word *nephesh*, or soul, is never translated by *pneuma*, or spirit, by the Septuagint translators, but always by the word *psyche*, or soul, thus showing that, in the judgment of the Septuagint translators, *nephesh* and *pneuma*, or soul and spirit, were two completely distinct things. But this appears more strongly from the different things that are spoken of them. The soul is very often identified in Scripture with the blood,† language which is never used of the spirit. The soul, as we have seen in this chapter, is said to be capable of death, and actually dies, whereas nothing of this kind is ever said of the spirit. Again : we have seen that in death the soul goes to Hades, while the

\* Ps. cxlvi. 4.

† Gen. ix. 5; Lev. xvii. 11, 14; Ps. xciv. 21; Prov. xxviii. 17; Ps. lxxii. 14.

spirit goes back to God, from whom it originally came. Again: we are frequently told that the soul sins; but this is language never used of the spirit. For these reasons, to which others could be added if they were at all required, we hold it as an indubitable truth of Scripture that the soul of man and his spirit are two essentially different things. In ordinary theology they are perpetually confounded, but never in the theology of the Bible. Divines and philosophers constantly speak of their soul and their spirit as one and the same thing, but this confusion is never seen in scriptural language. The Old Testament, as we have seen, keeps them perfectly distinct, and we will, in our next chapter, see that the New Testament observes a like distinction. In human life they are intimately connected as cause and effect. In man's death they are completely severed. It requires a resurrection to another life to renew the dissevered connection.

XXII. Before we leave this chapter we will say a few words on a scriptural phrase which is readily suggested to us throughout our inquiry, viz., what is it that the Scripture means by *saving a soul*? The ordinary explanation, we believe, is that it means restoring it to the holiness which it has lost since the fall of man, and, as a consequence, preserving it from a misery which, it is usually supposed, will be eternal. Now, while we hold that the restoration of the soul of man to holiness is an incalculable blessing, and absolutely essential to the saving of the soul, we do not hold that it is what is meant by saving the soul. The phrase has another and simpler meaning. To save a soul is simply to save what is the equivalent of soul—a *life*. Man was made to have an eternal life. He lost it by sin. His soul would have lived for ever if he had not sinned. It dies because he has sinned. But it may be saved out of and from this death; and this is, we believe, what Scripture means when it speaks of saving a soul from death, or saving a soul alive. The Christian's repentance and faith are not the life of the soul, but the way to that life. This life eternal is promised as God's great reward to faith and obedience. These fit a man for life and its true objects, as sin unfits him. When the man is fit for life eternal, God bestows it upon him. The way the believer walks here before his God is not his life, but the way to his life; as Christ said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life." To save a soul is to procure for it the eternal existence which God placed within man's power when He made him, and once more places within his power through the Gospel of Christ. "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

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## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE SOUL OF MAN, OR THE "PSYCHE" OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

I. WE now proceed to see what the New Testament says of the soul of man. Its term for soul is *psyche*. There is no doubt that the *nephesh* or soul of the Old Testament is identical with the *psyche* of the New Testament; i.e., that both terms are put for one and the same idea when they refer to the soul as a constituent part of man. The invariable translation of *nephesh* in the Septuagint version is *psyche*; and wherever in the New Testament a passage from the Old Testament is quoted, or referred to, in which the word *nephesh* occurs, it is translated by *psyche*.\* We therefore assume that the *psyche* or soul of the New Testament is equivalent to the *nephesh* or soul of the Old.

II. It is at once apparent of what advantage this is to us in the prosecution of our inquiry. It enables us, even before we have examined into the meaning of a single passage in which the word *psyche* occurs, to affirm of it everything that we have already established of the *nephesh* or soul of the Old Testament Scriptures. As, for examples, that it is distinct from the spirit, that it means that animal life which man shares in common with the brutes; that it is mortal and dies when man dies, that during the entire state of death, i.e., the period of time ending at the resurrection, it is in Hades, i.e., within the heart of the earth. All these things, established of the *nephesh* or soul of the Old Testament, are also established of the *psyche* or soul of the New Testament for the simple reason that *nephesh* and *psyche* mean one and the same thing.

III. An objection may, perhaps, be raised to this which, though it has no real foundation, may yet operate with some minds against the reception of truth. It is that the Greek *psyche* or soul had in the Greek language one uniform and established sense, which sense, therefore, must be supposed to be carried into the Septuagint and New Testament Greek; and that consequently this uniform Greek sense of the term is to be our absolute law in the interpretation of the Greek phrase, and may even be taken as determining the sense of its synonym *nephesh* in Hebrew instead of being determined by it. The supposed uniform sense of the Greek *psyche* or soul is by such objectors supposed to be an immortal principle or person within the body, whose existence is not at all affected by the destruction of the body.

IV. Now if the Greek had any such uniform and established sense, we freely admit the tremendous power of the argument. It is

\* Acts ii. 27, compared with Psalm xvi. 10; Rom. xi. 3, compared with 1 Kings xix. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 45, and Gen. ii. 7; Matt. xx. 28, and Isa. liii. 10.



one which we have ourselves used to determine the sense of the terms of the New Testament relative to future punishment, and to which no serious attempt at reply has ever been made.\* But to suppose that the same uniform sense is given to the term *psyche* or soul in the Greek language that is given in it to its terms for destruction, corruption, perishing, dying, is only to exhibit an utter ignorance of the variety of sense attributed in the Greek language to the term *psyche* according to the philosophical or theological sentiments of the speaker. *Psyche*, in the mouth of a Platonist, a Stoic, or an Epicurean, schools which represent the universal sentiments of Greek speakers and Greek thinkers, meant a totally different idea. It will be sufficient for this purpose to quote a passage from Arnobius, a Christian father of the third century, who was thoroughly conversant with Grecian sentiment. "This one," he says, speaking of the condition of souls, "thinks that they are both immortal, and survive the end of our earthly life; that one believes that they do not survive, but perish with the bodies themselves; the opinion of another, however, is that they suffer nothing immediately; but that, after the form of man has been laid aside, they are allowed to live a little longer, and then come under the power of death."† Such were the widely different ideas entertained of the soul by Grecian speakers. In the mouth of a Platonist it meant a never-dying principle, more properly, person; in the mouth of an Epicurean it did not mean a person at all, but simply animal life which perished with the body; in the mouth of the Stoic it meant a principle or person of greater vitality than the body, and which would therefore survive the body; but which was, after all, but mortal, and must, therefore, after a period of survival, itself yield to death. It is quite evident, therefore, that we come to consider the meaning of the Greek *psyche* or soul wholly unfettered by any uniformity of sense attached to it in the Greek language. It had no such uniform sense. Grecian thinkers were wholly at variance with one another as to its meaning; Grecian speakers used it in senses wholly opposite to each other. In the mouth of one speaker it meant a person or individual; in the mouth of another it meant a quality of a person: in the mouth of one it meant what was immortal, and could never die; in the mouth of another it meant what was mortal and must die. We are free, then, to examine the New Testament to see what is its view of the soul; we are free to assume that the sense attached to the *nephesh* or soul of the Old Testament is that attached to the *psyche* or soul of the New. The Grecian thinker was at fault upon the nature of the soul: we may examine wholly independently of him what God is pleased to tell us about it in His Word.

V. We observed in our last chapter that the Old Testament attri-

\* "The Duration, &c., of Future Punishment." Third Edition, chap. iv. Longmans and Co.

† Arnobius. Adv. Gentes. ii. 57. Ante-Nicene Library. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

buted the possession of souls to the lower creatures as well as to man. We have now to remark that the New Testament does the same. In Revelation we are told that "the third part of the creatures that were in the sea *and had life*," literally, "*and had souls*," "died."\* It does not matter at all for our argument whether the creatures here spoken of be literally creatures living in the sea, *i.e.*, fishes, or men symbolised by such creatures. In either case the possession of *souls* is attributed to the creatures themselves. Our translators have, to some extent, disguised this by their translation of "life;" but the Greek scholar will at once see the force of the original Greek, stronger by being put in the plural than if it were put in the singular.

VI. This possession by the lower creatures of soul naturally leads us to see, what we now will proceed to show, that the New Testament means by soul that which the Old Testament signified by *nephesh*: namely, animal life, that life which is possessed by every creature that has existence, and which perishes when that creature dies.

VII. Such was the primary meaning of the Greek *psyche* or soul in the Greek language. Thus, Liddell and Scott's Dictionary gives us as the primary sense, "*the breath, life, spirit, of man and animals*." It came also, with the spread of the Platonic theory, to convey the idea which this philosophy entertained of the *psyche*, viz.—as an immortal principle within the body. That animal life is its true sense in the New Testament appears in our authorised version in spite of those strong Platonic prejudices which forced our translators to suppress this fact as much as possible. Let it be remembered that the English word "soul" is that which Platonic theorists prefer to "life" as the translation of *psyche*, as conveying from usage better that idea which they attach to the Greek *psyche*. Yet in spite of this strong prejudice, which led them as frequently as possible to translate *psyche* by soul, out of ninety-eight places in which the Greek *psyche* occurs, and is translated either by soul or life, they have been compelled to translate it "life" in no less than forty-one places, because "soul"—*meaning by soul their sense of it*—would be in those places *wholly inadmissible*. Nor will it be thought out of place in this inquiry that *in the Gospels*, where our Lord's words are recorded, our translators have been compelled to translate *psyche* by "life" in twenty-four places, while they have translated it by "soul" in only twenty places.

VIII. Now what is the force of this fact? A certain Greek word, *psyche*, occurs in the New Testament a certain number of times. The translators of that New Testament had two different meanings in their minds for this word; one of those meanings was "animal life," such as all living creatures have: another was "an immortal principle," which they supposed to exist within man, and which they called by the word "soul." Their strong prejudice led them as frequently as possible to suppose that *psyche* was put for the supposed

\* Rev. viii. 9.



immortal principle; and yet with all their prejudices they are compelled to acknowledge by their translation of it, that in very nearly half the places where it occurs in the New Testament, it cannot by any possibility be supposed to mean the immortal principle; while, as used by Christ Himself, they are forced to confess that in the majority of instances He cannot be supposed to have intended by the *psyche* an immortal principle in man. Surely such a confession, coming from such a source, is argument of no weak nature that "animal life," and not an "immortal principle," is the true and proper sense for *psyche* in the New Testament.

IX. But we must examine a little closer into this matter. We affirm that, whatever be the meaning of the Greek *psyche* in the New Testament, it should certainly *have one uniform meaning* throughout that New Testament whenever it is used as descriptive of a constituent part of human nature. We do not deny that it may have, when thus used, different translations; but we contend that those different translations should be taken as expressive of *one and the same idea*. We find no fault with the word being sometimes translated "soul" and sometimes "life;" but then we do insist that "soul" and "life" should mean one and the same thing. To suppose the word *psyche* to have two different senses when spoken of as an important constituent part of human nature, and that we are sometimes to take it in one of these senses and sometimes in another, when the New Testament itself does not hint that it is to be differently understood,—that we are to mix up and alternate their senses just as we please, is, to our minds, to interpret the language of God's Word as we would not dare to interpret any book of man.

X. Let us take an example. Plato has written a book, his *Phædo*, upon the nature of the *psyche* or soul of man. This word *psyche* occurs in a great number of places throughout this book. He affirms and denies a great many things of this *psyche*. What would be thought of an interpreter of Plato who would venture to give to this important word of Plato two entirely distinct senses, and attribute now one sense and now another to the word, without the smallest intimation from Plato that he ever used the word in different senses. What, I say, would be thought of an interpreter of Plato, who would say that in one paragraph Plato used it in one sense, and in another paragraph that he used it in another, while Plato himself never hinted anything of the kind? What would be thought of the interpreter of Plato who would in *one sentence* of Plato take this word in one sense, and in the *very next sentence* take it in a quite different sense, although Plato himself was proceeding in one unbroken line of argument? We confidently say that such an interpreter would be dismissed with contumely as assuming a task for which he had shown himself utterly unworthy, and held up to scorn as introducing a principle of interpretation which would throw into utter confusion all human thought. This principle of interpretation, which would be rejected in the case

of a commentator or translator of Plato, or any human author, is the very principle which the translators of our authorised version of God's Word have gone upon, and hitherto without rebuke. Against it we, for one, raise our voice.

XI. A translation is to a considerable extent a commentary. When any word is capable of two different translations, and one is chosen rather than another, then the translator puts his comment upon the original. A translation is of all commentaries the most subtle. The reader fancies he is reading the words of the author when he is, perhaps, reading the words of the translator, putting into the author's mouth sentiments he never felt. It is on this account that, of all tasks that can be assumed by any man, the office of translating God's Word is the most responsible. We will show our readers how our translators have treated the words of Christ when he speaks of the human soul.

XII. They have done what, we affirm with little danger of contradiction, no translator of any human author would dare to do. Christ speaks often of the *psyche*, the soul of man. He tells us of its value: how it may be saved: how it may be lost. This *psyche* of man is ever in his thoughts, for it was to save it he came into the world. And yet our translators have in the various discourses and warnings of Christ translated this *psyche* by two different words which, in their estimation, and so used for this very reason, convey two different and opposite ideas,—viz., "life," i.e. animal life; and "soul," i.e., an immortal principle. Now we say that throughout the Gospels there is no intimation given that our Lord ever uses this important word in such different senses; and that to use it thus differently is to do as great violence to his language as to attribute two different senses to the same term in the *Phædo* of Plato. But there are instances in which this is done of so flagrant a character that we venture to say that no scholar will now stand up and defend them. To some of these we will now draw attention.

XIII. We will first draw attention to Matt. xvi. 25-6, which runs thus in our authorised version: "Whosoever will save his *life* shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his *life* for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own *soul*? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his *soul*?"\* In these two verses, which follow one another, and in which one consecutive argument is followed out by Christ, "life" in the twenty-fifth verse is given by the translators as expressing a different idea from "soul" in the twenty-sixth. The one is given as expressive of *animal life*; the other as expressive of an *immortal principle*. And yet will it be believed by the English reader that the *very same Greek* word, *psyche*, stands for "life" in verse 25, and for "soul" in verse 26? Yet so it is. It is surely apparent that our Lord means the *same thing* by this word in these two consecutive sentences of a con-

\* Matt. xvi. 25, 26.

secutive argument. Why, then, did not the translators use the same word in translation? Because a miserable philosophical theory of theirs about the soul forbade them. They could not give the true natural translation, that which must have struck them as obvious, *without contradicting Plato*. We will show this. We will suppose them to translate verse 25, giving there the word "soul" as in verse 26: "Whosoever will save his *soul* (his immortal principle) shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his soul (his immortal principle) for my sake, shall find it." Every one will see such a translation would be impossible to men imbued with the Platonic theory. For, according to them, "to save a soul" is not to preserve it from destruction or annihilation; since, according to their theory, the soul cannot suffer such. To "save a soul" is, with them, to turn from sin to God, and so avoid the punishment of hell; and this they cannot deny that every one should do, and is commanded to do. Hence Scripture and their own knowledge of it forbids them to translate *psyche* by "soul" in verse 25, because they mean by "soul" an immortal principle in man. But their own theory forbids them to translate it by "life" in verse 26; for so translated, their theory would be contradicted. Thus translated it would run thus: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" This translation, we see, is forbidden by their own theory, for it would teach us the folly of those who have in this life prolonged their life by the denial of Christ, and even gained all that this world has to give; but who, in the scene of coming retribution after the judgment will lose their physical life which they had here prolonged. The Platonic theory forbids the idea that physical life will be lost in the scene of future retribution; and hence the translators were forced to translate *psyche* in verse 26 by "soul," meaning thereby an immortal principle whose immortality forbids the idea of its extinction; and hence forces upon the word "lose," and the phrase "lose his soul," an unnatural and absurd interpretation.

XIV. We defy any man to contend that *psyche* should have two different meanings in verses 25 and 26. We assume, then, that it cannot mean physical life which may be terminated in verse 25, and an immortal existence which cannot be terminated in verse 26. We say that we must choose which of these two senses it is to bear *in both places*. We conclude that as no one can maintain it to mean an immortal principle in verse 25, but that it must mean there physical life; so it must mean physical life in verse 26. So translated the verses are harmonious and reasonable. "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?"

XV. We will now give another example of the violence done to the translation of the word *psyche* by the Platonic views of our trans-



lators. In Luke xii. 19-23 the word *psyche* occurs five times. In verses 19 and 20 it is translated by "soul," in verses 22 and 23 it is translated by "life." Now whoever reads this passage will see that it forms one consecutive argument. In verses 16-21 our Lord utters the parable of the rich man: from the 22nd verse he proceeds to draw the lesson deducible from it. The "therefore" of the 22nd verse connects the entire passage. No one then can suppose that when he speaks of the *psyche* three times in verses 19 and 20, and then proceeds to speak twice of this same *psyche* in verses 22 and 23, he means by it two different things. But, as no one can contend that in verses 22 and 23 the word can mean an "immortal principle," they must needs confess that it cannot mean such an immortal principle in verses 19 and 20. The translation of *psyche*, therefore, in these latter verses should be "life," as it is rendered in verses 22 and 23; or, if we prefer the word "soul" throughout, we must at least confess that it means simply and only physical life.

XVI. These instances are sufficient to show us two things. First, the injurious influence which the Platonic theory has had upon our authorised version of the Scriptures; 2nd, that the word *psyche* has evidently, when spoken of a constituent part of human nature, *one uniform meaning*. We do not contend that it must always be translated by one and the same word "life;" though we think that such translation would bring out the sense of the original perhaps the most clearly. We have no objection to the old familiar word "soul." But what we do most solemnly protest against is such translation as our authorised version is not seldom guilty of, namely, in sentences and consecutive arguments giving to this word *psyche* two different translations, as though in these consecutive sentences it meant *two different ideas*, when it is plainly put for one and the same. We attribute no moral blame to our translators for this. They must have seen the violence they were doing to language. But they had firmly fixed in their minds a philosophical theory of the inalienable immortality of the soul, which they never dreamed of questioning; and hence this supposed truth forced them to do a violence to language of the grossest kind. But now, when we are promised a revised version of Scripture, and when the old Platonic theory of immortality no longer passes unquestioned, we solemnly call upon those learned and good men who have undertaken a much needed office, to see that they do not allow any philosophical predilections to cast upon their revised version the grievous slur they have brought upon King James's Bible. If they do, the Scriptures will require to be revised again. We now turn to resume our view of what is the true meaning of *psyche* in the New Testament, and will proceed to show that it means there a mortal and perishable thing.

XVII. What we mean *here* by saying that the soul of man is mortal is not that it is doomed to die at the second death in the case of the wicked, but that it dies and perishes in the case of every man at the



period of natural death in this world. Of course, we hold that the souls of the wicked will die eternally in the punishment of hell. But what we here maintain is this, that Scripture teaches us that the result of the first death is the death of the soul of every man, redeemed or unredeemed. Between its death at these two periods there is no difference *as to the actual condition*, while there is the grand, essential distinction *as to the time* in which this condition endures. The soul of the believer dies at the first death a true and real death; but it has the pledge and the promise of an eternal life. Hence, while it is truly dead until resurrection, as to its actual condition, it is truly alive *as the heir of immortality*. Hence, while it is destroyed for time, it is indestructible for eternity. But, so far as regards the entire intermediate state which commences when the believer dies, and ends when he rises from the grave, we maintain that the New Testament teaches us that, during this state, the soul of every man is in the state of death, is dead, has no existence. *To God* it then lives: in His mind and purpose it has, from the moment it chose Christ, an imperishable life: but in submitting to that death which is the penalty of original sin, the soul of every man suffers an actual and positive death so long as the state of death lasts and is in force.

XVIII. One text which teaches us this very plainly is Mark iii. 4, where our Lord asks His enemies, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, or to do evil? *to save a soul or to kill it?*" Here, as was their wont in cases of the kind, our translators give us the translation of "life" for *psyche*, but still it is of *this psyche* that our Lord here speaks. To prolong life is, in His mind, *to save the psyche*; to end life is, in His mind, *to kill the psyche*. Hence, if we will believe the words of Christ, *the psyche of man*, which, whether we translate it by "soul" or "life," is the same thing, *is killed when natural death* is inflicted by one man upon another. And hence we see that, so far from its being impossible to kill a soul or *psyche*, it is a thing which is continually done by man to man, and actually happens whenever death takes place. Our Lord teaches us the same truth in Luke ix. 54-6. James and John, angry with the Samaritans who refused to receive their Master, proposed to call down fire from heaven to consume them. Our Lord rebuked with the words, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man is not come to *destroy men's lives (or souls, psyche)*, but to save them." Hence, according to Christ, *the first death is the destruction of the psyche, i.e., of the soul of man*. Such was the common sentiment of the apostles and other early Christians untainted with the philosophy of Plato. In sending Paul and Barnabas to the Church of Antioch, they describe them as men who "had hazarded (*i.e., put into danger of destruction*) *their lives*" or *souls (psyche)*.\* So far from thinking the *psyche* or soul of man to be that invulnerable immortal principle which the Platonic philosophy teaches, they knew it to be

\* Acts xv. 26.

open and exposed to death. So he also teaches when he quotes the sad words addressed by Elijah to God, "I am left alone, *and they seek my life,*" or *soul (psyche).*\* So far from thinking the *psyche* inaccessible, both Paul and Elijah agreed in thinking it exposed to the attacks of men to kill and to destroy it. John teaches us the same truth in the book of Revelation, where, from the adjective "living," attached to the Greek *psyche*, our unfortunate translators were unable to avoid the use of the word "soul," which, in every similar case where they could help it, they have scrupulously shunned. "*Every living soul died in the sea.*" Here we are told that in natural death *the soul dies*, and this expression is all the stronger from having the adjective "living" attached to "soul."† Once more, John tells us plainly that *all souls*, whether of the righteous or the wicked, after death *continue without life* until the resurrection. In Rev. xx. 4, he tells us that, in the prophetic vision of the future with which he was favoured, he saw "*the souls of them that were beheaded*" in a living state. He goes on, in verse 5, to speak of *other souls*. He tells us that these latter "*did not live again*" until after a certain period. Hence we gather of the former that they had been raised to life, *i.e.*, had been without life, in a condition of death, until their resurrection.‡ These passages of Scripture taken from every part of it, giving us the inspired utterances of our Lord and His apostles, teach us that *the psyche of man*, whatever translation we choose to give it, whether we call it "soul" or "life," does truly and really die and suffer destruction when the first death takes place. The *psyche* of man is mortal, and dies in the case of every man.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HADES, OR THE "SHEOL" OF THE HEBREWS.

I. WE now proceed to a very important part of our inquiry, viz., the nature of that state or place which is called, in the Hebrew Scriptures, Sheol. Throughout this chapter we will call it Hades. Hades is a name more familiar to our ears than Sheol, and of the identity of the two terms in meaning there can be, and we believe is, no doubt. The Greek translation of the Septuagint invariably renders Sheol by Hades. In the quotation of passages from the Old Testament into the New, where the word Sheol occurs in the former, it is always translated Hades in the latter.§ It had been well if our translators had observed the uniformity of translation of which the Septuagint Version set them the example. In their utter confusion of ideas,

\* Rom. xi. 3.

† Rev. xvi. 3.

‡ Rev. xx. 4, 5.

§ Acts ii. 27, 31; Psalm xvi. 10.

however, on this whole question, produced by their adoption of the Platonic ideas of death and the soul, they have given to the Hebrew word Sheol such a variety of translation as has effectually prevented the English reader of the Old Testament from being able to form any opinion as to what the Old Testament really teaches. The Hebrew Sheol has been translated by them "hell," "the grave," "the pit," just as they, in the utter confusion of their thoughts, supposed best. The result has been a confusion of thought upon this question which seems all but impossible to remove. We trust the revisers of our translation will attend to this very important point. We would suggest Hades as the invariable translation of Sheol. Our translators surely need not scruple to follow the example which has been set them by the inspired writings of the New Testament. It is true that the word Hades is associated in our minds with the pictures drawn by Homer, Virgil, and the Greek tragedians, but we venture to say that the only result of making Hades a prominent word in the Old Testament will be to show how utterly different a description God gives of it from that which has been drawn by heathen writers. If our revisers should object to the term Hades, which we fancy they will be compelled to use in their revision of the New Testament, their next best way, in our judgment, would be to give us the Hebrew term Sheol itself untranslated. It will soon become a familiar word. The English reader will then be able to see for himself how it is understood and used in Scripture. If it has but one sense, he will be able readily to ascertain this sense. If it have several senses, the usage of Scripture will enable him to see for himself what they are. We respectfully call upon our revisers not to perpetuate the confusion of thought which the present variety of translation has introduced. "Hell" is a word all but universally associated with the place of future punishment, and is a most unsuitable translation for this reason. Suitable as we ourselves think "the grave" is for its translation, yet Christian thinkers are by no means agreed on this, and therefore we do not ask for it. "The pit" is an expression to which it is difficult to attach any definite meaning. It may stand for anything we choose to imagine. Let us then have the translation which God has given it already, and call it Hades. If not, let us have the word Sheol itself untranslated. We will here merely inform our readers that we invariably use the word Hades as the equivalent for Sheol, and that whenever we use Hades they are to understand that the Hebrew Sheol is spoken of.

II. The locality of Hades is a matter easily decided. It is, beyond a doubt, a place and condition within this earth of ours. It is always spoken of agreeably with such an idea. One distinct reference to its locality places this beyond a question. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram have headed a rebellion against the authority of Moses in the wilderness. Moses appeals to the mode of death which these men were to die as deciding that God was on his side and against them.



He said, "If the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, *and they go down alive into Hades*; then ye shall understand that these men have sinned against the Lord." According to the appeal of Moses was the issue of this most strange matter: "the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, *went down alive into Hades and the earth closed upon them.*"\* This one passage decides the question. Our authorised version obscures the thing to the English reader by translating Sheol "*the pit*;" but the original Hebrew is Sheol, and we therefore are here told by Moses that Sheol or Hades is within this earth of ours. Every other of the very numerous passages in the Old Testament only confirms this view: not a single passage can be quoted that is even apparently opposed to it. It would therefore be mere waste of time to spend further labour upon this point. Hades is situated within the crust of this earth. Our further inquiries will only confirm our view.

III. There can be no question that to this Hades, this place and state within our earth, the Old Testament teaches that all souls go in death. Of course throughout this chapter we speak only of the time antecedent to the resurrection of Christ, when, according to some, a very important change was made in the intermediate state of believers. But of that period of time which preceded the resurrection of our Lord, there can be no doubt that the Old Testament taught that all souls went during it to Hades. A few texts will be sufficient to show this. The Psalmist affirms it of the soul of every man whatsoever, in these words,—"*What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of Hades?*"† Here, as usual with our translators, the English reader is mystified by the translation "*the grave*" in the authorised version. In the older translation of the Psalms retained in the Book of Common Prayer, the translation is "*hell*." The Hebrew word however for these varying translations is Sheol, *i.e.*, Hades, and the text tells us that the soul of every man without exception goes at death into the hand of Hades. The truth expressed by David, speaking in the person of Christ, that his "*soul should not be left in Hades*, shows us also that the soul of our blessed Lord, and by undoubted inference the souls of all men (for the history of Christ's humanity, with the exception of his miraculous conception, is the history of our common humanity) are in Hades during the state of death.‡ The soul could not be delivered from a place in which it was not previous to its deliverance.

IV. But not only does the Old Testament teach us that the soul of every man goes in and during death to Hades, but it also teaches us that *man himself, as a person or individual*, goes in death to Hades. Passages affirming this are very numerous: we will content ourselves with quoting a few of them. Job teaches it in these words, "As the

\* Numb. xvi. 30, 33; Deut. xxxii. 22. † Ps. lxxxix. 48. ‡ Ps. xvi. 10; xlix. 15.



cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so *he that goeth down to Hades* shall come up no more:" and again he says, speaking of the wicked, "*they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to Hades.*"\* Again the Psalmist teaches us this when, speaking of the foolish, he says, "*like sheep they are laid in Hades; death shall feed on them.*"† And, once more, Jacob expresses his faith that in death he would himself go there, and that it was not merely for the wicked it was ordained, when, on hearing of Joseph's disappearance, "he refused to be comforted, and said, "*I will go down into Hades unto my son mourning.*"‡ We thus see it to be the teaching of the Old Testament that every soul of man, and every man himself, goes to Hades and remains in Hades during the period of death.

V. Again, as we have learned so many useful lessons about ourselves from the lower creatures of God's hands, so now we learn another lesson from them relative to Hades. It is what will doubtless surprise and considerably shock our Platonising divines, namely, that not only do men go on death to Hades, but that *beasts also on death go there!* We saw before that the lower creatures are possessed of a spirit of life from God, which on death goes back to God, just as does that of man: we now will see that on this dissolution happening the beasts themselves go to that very Hades to which man himself is consigned. This startling fact, so abhorrent to Plato and his Christian disciples, is, however, told us in that Word of God which we see to be perpetually teaching us a physiology of man of a kind totally unlike that of Plato. We cannot of course expect to find many passages of a nature such as this, nor could we expect even one whose object it is to teach us a truth of the kind. The expression comes in incidentally, just as we should expect, when speaking of another subject of more importance. It is not, however, the less valuable for that. The passage to which we refer is one already quoted, where the Psalmist, speaking of foolish men in their death, says, "*like sheep they are laid in Hades.*"§ Our authorised version translates, "*like sheep they are laid in the grave:*" the earlier version in the Book of Common Prayer translates "*they lie in the hell like sheep;*" but here we have it affirmed that sheep are in Sheol, *i.e.*, in Hades, as well as men.

VI. We will next draw our readers' attention to the fact that Hades is always spoken of in the Old Testament as a place of death. The ordinary Platonic theology tells us that the grave, the receptacle of the body, is a place of death, but that Hades, the receptacle of disembodied souls, is a place of life. Denying that the soul in death dies or perishes: holding that it retains a perfect life, susceptible of every thought that we now have, even beyond its power here susceptible of joyous or painful emotions, and in the case of the redeemed enjoying a happiness greater by far than it had ever experienced in this age or world, they hold, and must needs hold, *Hades to be a land*

\* Job vii. 9; xxi. 13.

† Ps. xlix. 14.

‡ Gen. xxxvii. 35.

§ Ps. xlix. 14.

of life. For all, good and bad, they must hold it to be a *land of the living*; while, with their ideas of what life in its most true and proper sense means, viz., well being and happiness and holiness, they must in the case of redeemed souls hold Hades to be *pre-eminently a land of life*. Where there is no sin—where there is no sorrow—where peace and happiness are enjoyed, and even a brighter existence is looked forward to with hope and assurance, is most assuredly and unquestionably a *land of life*. Compared with it this present earth, even in its happiest aspect, is a vale of tears. Accordingly the very names which common theology attach to that part of Hades where the righteous souls are supposed to dwell apart from the wicked fully carries out their idea of it. Two of those names are "*Paradise*," and "*Abraham's Bosom*." Paradise is a land of life: Abraham's Bosom is a land of life. And thus it is clearly seen that whatever ideas they may attach to the supposed division of Hades, where they locate wicked souls, that part of Hades where they locate righteous souls must be truly and pre-eminently a *land of life*.

VII. But is it *ever* thus spoken of in the Old Testament? We leave out of view here the case of wicked souls. It might well be that it would be only in gloomy terms that Scripture would speak of their locality. So we will leave them out altogether. But righteous souls, and righteous men, are in Hades as well as they. Now does Scripture ever once speak of Hades in connection with them as a land of life? Never. *Not so much as once*. We call upon our Platonic divines to produce a single passage of the Old Testament which does. We know of course that there is here and there a poetical image, as Isaiah xiv., where those in Hades are said to perform the acts of living men. To all such we will apply ourselves by and by. If we do not mistake, every such passage speaks of the wicked and not of the righteous. But what we do say is this, that every passage of the Old Testament that speaks without poetical figure of Hades in relation to believers, or describes the feelings of believers at their prospect of entering upon the Hades state, speaks of that state and place as one of death and not of life.

VIII. We will refer our readers to several passages of Scripture which invariably connect the idea and mention of Hades with the idea of death. We cannot, however, dwell upon these passages, and there is no occasion for our doing so. The quotation of the passages will probably in most cases suffice. Hannah, in her inspired song of praise to God for the birth of Samuel, describes God as one who "*killeth and maketh alive: who bringeth down to Hades and bringeth up*." Here, bringing down to Hades is equivalent to killing, as bringing up from Hades is equivalent to making alive. Hannah's idea of Hades was as a place of death and without life.\* Again, David gives us precisely the same as his idea of Hades in his own case: "the sorrows of *Hades* compassed me about; the snares of

\* 1 Sam. ii. 6.

*death* prevented me."\* Hades in the first clause is given as his equivalent for death in the second. This idea is frequently repeated throughout the Psalms. Thus we read, "O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from Hades: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." Bringing up from Hades is reckoned as identical with keeping alive, Hades being reckoned a place of death. Again we read, "What man he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of Hades?" Death and Hades are here equivalents.† So the idea runs throughout Scripture. In Proverbs we are told of the strange woman, that "her feet go down to death: her steps take hold on Hades:" and again, "her house is the way to Hades, going down to the chambers of death."‡ The bride in the book of Canticles speaks in the same strain: "Love is as strong as death; jealousy is cruel as Hades."§ Hades and death are regarded as synonyms. So runs the idea as we go on through the Old Testament to its close. Isaiah represents the scornors of Jerusalem as saying, "We have made a covenant with death, and with Hades are we at agreement."|| Death and Hades were, in their minds, one and the same condition. And so Habakkuk speaks where he describes the proud man as one "who enlargeth his desire as Hades, and is as death."¶ Thus invariably and throughout the Old Testament, from its earliest books to its close, is the idea of Hades and Death associated and linked together as in truth one and the same idea. So far is the Old Testament from describing Hades, or any division of it, as the land of life, that it invariably describes it as the land of the shadow of death.

IX. And hence the wail of the believer under the ancient dispensation, when he contemplated his going into this dark, silent, lifeless state of Hades, while he saw not with the Christian's clearness of vision its dominion broken and its rule abolished in the resurrection of Christ from its power and domain. Did David imagine he would be alive in Hades? No; he knew that he would not. He knew that when he went, as go, he knew, he must, to that land, he went to a land of utter silence and of utter darkness. "In Hades," he said, in one of his inspired psalms, "who shall give thee thanks?"\*\* He knew and tells us that not one would. Of all that innumerable host of holy men who had passed out of this life and been gathered together into Hades, he tells us that no note of praise could ascend from the lips of a single one of them while there. Abel there uttered no note of praise: Noah was silent: and Abraham, and Sarah, and Isaac, and Rebecca, and Moses the man of God, and Samuel, the prophet of God, and even himself, the sweet singer of Israel, could none of them praise the Lord. And was that a land of life where this vast congregation of Saints were silent? No. Hades was not a land

\* 2 Sam. xxii. 6.

† Ps. xxx. 3; xlix. 14, 15; lxxxix. 48; cxvi. 3.

‡ Prov. v. 5; vii. 27.

§ Cant. viii. 6.

|| Isa. xxviii. 15.

¶ Hab. ii. 5.

\*\* Ps. vi. 5.



of life. It was "the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness."\* What, think you, is that land? Is it Paradise, or the Bosom of Abraham?

X. *It is the grave!* It is no other land. To this Scripture brings us at last. Our inquiries can reach no other goal. Have not our readers come to this conclusion even before we bring a directer proof? That place within this earth whither man, and man's soul, goes on death, where the beast of the field goes when it lays down its life, where man is dead and silent, where death reigns with unbroken slumber, that place is no other than the grave. Yes: Hades is the grave. It is the silent, invisible land to which God told sinful Adam he must go when He said, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." We will show by and by further proof, though further proof is surely not required.

XI. While on this question we must admit that lexicons of high authority are against us. The Sheol of the Hebrews is both by Fürst and Gesenius described as "*the region of ghosts*," while neither of these eminent Hebraists give it the sense of "*the grave*." Here, however, we hold ourselves as just as capable of ascertaining the meaning of Sheol as either Fürst or Gesenius, or any other man. The etymology of the word is uncertain, according to Gesenius; and if so, we can derive no help towards its meaning from those cognate languages, with which we are sorry to say, we are unacquainted. According to Fürst it is derived from the Hebrew verb Shahal, to dig, an etymology which, it is quite evident, points rather to the grave, which men do actually dig and hollow out, than to any supposed region within the earth, wholly inaccessible to the research of man. If, as seems to us not at all improbable, it is derived from the Hebrew verb Shaal, to ask, it is also evident that such an etymology is quite suitable to the sense of "*the grave*," which we put upon it, that hungry grave which is never satisfied, and never has enough, but is gathering to itself generation after generation of mankind. But whatever we suppose of the etymology or want of etymology of this word Sheol, it is quite plain, that to the *Hebrew Scriptures alone we can look for its sense*. It here occurs quite often enough to be able to ascertain its sense, and we will take its sense from no other source, neither from lexicographers who may have been misled as to its meaning by philosophical opinions of their own, nor from Gentile fables about Pluto and Orcus and the Shades, nor from Jewish tales gathered from heathen sources, or generated by the natural superstition of the human mind. To the Old Testament and its usage alone we appeal to know what God meant by the word Sheol, a word in constant use from the opening of the Bible to its close.

XII. Indeed, we think that what lexicographers opposed to our

\* Job. x. 22.



view tell us is the proper meaning of Sheol, or Hades, in the Old Testament, tells strongly in our favour. We refer here to the lexicon of Gesenius. It will be remembered that we hold Sheol to be *a land of death*, and to be equivalent to the grave: Gesenius on the contrary holds it not to be the grave, but to be *a land of living ghosts*. Yet how does this eminent authority, after his careful examination of this important word in Scripture, define it? Here is his definition: "Sheol," he tells us, "is the Hades of the Hebrews; in which thick darkness reigns, and where all men after death *live* as ghosts, *without thought or sensation*." To us this appears perfect nonsense. We deny wholly that a thing which has neither "thought nor sensation" has animal life at all. To affirm animal life of that which has neither thought nor sensation is to make life equivalent to death. But the important thing here is the fact that Gesenius tells us that, according to the usage of Scripture, those who are in Sheol, or Hades, are *devoid of thought and sensation*. This is really all that we contend for. To our minds the man that is devoid of thought and sensation is *dead*. This Gesenius allows to be the case of all in Hades. If he likes to call this thoughtless, senseless state, *a living state*, of course he can do so. It is for him or his followers to justify this use of language, which certainly is not justified in any of our standard English lexicons with which we are acquainted. To our minds to say that a man who is "without thought or sensation" is a living man is the same as saying that sweet is bitter, or round is square. We claim Gesenius as really on our side when he affirms of everything in Hades that it is "without thought or sensation." When he also affirms of it that it is *alive*, we make bold to say that he uses the word alive in a *non-natural sense*.

XIII. The frequency with which Sheol, or Hades, is translated by "*the grave*" in our authorised version is a strong argument in favour of its being the true sense.\* So far from having, as some suppose, a strong prejudice in favour of this translation *they had a very strong prejudice against it*. With their ideas of the immortality of the soul, of the nature of the soul as a true personality existing after bodily dissolution, they had a very strong feeling leading them to suppose that place where they knew that all souls, at least in the Old Dispensation, went on death to be *a land of the living*. They were most unwilling with this leading idea of theirs, which they must guard as much as possible from intrusion, to identify the Hades whither the soul went with the grave whither the body went. And yet here, as everywhere in respect of their Platonic ideas, Scripture was every now and then rudely breaking in on their sacred idea. The Hades which they would fain confine to a place of departed ghosts, ethereal, yet full of life and thought and sensation, they could not help seeing *must sometimes be identified with that grave* from which they would dissociate it. And hence the fact that Hades, or Sheol, is very frequently tran-

\* Job xxi. 13; xvii. 13; xxiv. 19; Gen. xxxvii. 35; xlii. 38; xliv. 29, 31; Ps. xxx. 2.

slated "the grave" in our authorised version is a very powerful argument that such is its proper translation. We will now proceed to show that such is its sense in Scripture.

XIV. We have shown in this chapter that not only is the soul of man said in Scripture to go to Hades, but *the man himself*, the true person, the I, the self, goes there. Now it is equally certain that the man, the person, the I, is said in Scripture to go to the grave. Hades and the grave must therefore be one and the same place, unless we insist upon the absurdity and impossibility of there being two persons or individuals in death, whereas there was but one in life. Jacob went down to Hades: Jacob was buried in the grave of Machpelah. Both propositions are true according to Scripture: both are equally true. But from their truth it follows, as a matter of certainty, that Hades and the grave were one and the same. Whoever disputes this must also be prepared to maintain that there were two distinct individual Jacobs! In life there was but one Jacob: death, according to our Platonic thinkers, converted him into two. And so they must say of every other person as they must say it of Jacob. There were two Abels, one in Hades, the other in the grave: two Noahs, the one in Hades, the other in the grave: two Abrahams, the one in Hades, the other in the grave: and so on of every individual who ever breathed the breath of life.

XV. We have also, to the astonishment and disgust no doubt of our Platonic divines and thinkers, shown that according to Scripture *beasts go on death to Hades: What is their Hades?* Is there an invisible nether world of ghost-animals? Have we not only a nether world where the ghosts of every man, woman, and child who has ever lived are wandering about in possession of their ghostly life, but have we also a nether world where are ghost elephants, and ghost horses, and ghost sheep and dogs, &c., &c.? The poor untutored Indian is said in poetry to entertain the hope that perhaps his ghost dog may bear his own ghost company into that ghost land where there is the ghost elk, and bear, and buffalo, to be hunted by the ghost Indian and his ghost dog! Is the fancy of the American savage after all the starting point for Christian theology? But if this may not be: if the Hades of the lower creatures must needs be the grave: if their Hades state means their going back in death to be dust and ashes as they once were: then Hades even for man must needs be allowed to be *that humbling grace* which casts contempt upon our pride, for we too shall lie in Hades even as they do!

XVI. Now this is the very thing which Scripture affirms of Hades. We must call to mind the popular idea of Hades. It is then a *ghost-land*, where ghost-men live, shadowy, unsubstantial: there are no bodies of men, and no parts of human bodies, in this ghost-land. Such cannot descend to Hades: Hades is not for them. But is such the representation of Scripture? We will see.

XVII. We will first draw attention to the full description of

Hades given by Job. It exhibits the primitive faith of well-instructed and holy men as to the nature of Hades. Job's words are, "If I wait, *Hades is mine house*; I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to *corruption*, thou art my father; to the *worm*, thou art my mother and my sister. And where is now my hope? As for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of Hades, when our rest together is *in the dust*."\* It is, we think, utterly impossible to read these words without seeing that Job considered Hades and the grave identical. Our translators, compelled to see it, have here translated Sheol by "*the grave*," and so prevented English readers from judging for themselves Job's sentiments on Sheol. But the Hebrew word is Sheol, and Sheol, or Hades, was thought by Job to be the place where "corruption" ruled, where "the worm" preyed upon the carcase, not a place where ethereal ghost-men lived either in pain or joy. Job thought that Hades was the grave.

XVIII. Hades, let us recollect, is, according to popular belief, the land of ghosts, souls, or spirits, which are often supposed to be the same as souls. Hades is never allowed, according to this popular belief, to contain *the bodies*, or any part of the bodies of men. The body, according to this belief, goes to the grave, the living, ethereal, unsubstantial soul goes to Hades. The heathen poet Virgil gives the closest view that we know of as to the popular idea of Hades and the righteous souls in it, when he describes the *shades of his Elysian Fields* as "*shapes like the light winds, and as nearly as possible resembling fleeting dreams*."† No part of the gross body of our humanity is ever supposed to go to the ghost-land of Hades. But is this the view that the Old Testament gives us? Not at all. The Old Testament supposes that the bodies of men go on death to Hades. We will give some instances of this.

XIX. Jacob is urged by his sons to send Benjamin down into Egypt. He refuses, fearful of losing him as he had already lost Joseph. He refuses in these words: "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone; if mischief befall him by the way in which ye go, then shall ye *bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to Hades*." The same sentiment is twice afterwards repeated in connection with this subject.‡ It was Jacob's belief that his grey hairs, which we suppose is put for the entire aged frame of the patriarch, would go on death to Hades; *i.e.*, he identified Hades with the grave just as Job did. Popular belief does not admit grey hairs, or any hairs, into its Hades. We will now see what was the opinion of Moses. We have already referred to this passage, and will therefore be brief on it. Moses pronounces the doom of the Levitical rebels in these words:—"If the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, and they *go down living into Hades*." According to the doom pronounced

\* Job xvii. 13—16,

† Æneid, vi. 702.

‡ Gen. xlii. 38; xliv. 29, 31.



was its execution by God: “The earth opened her mouth, and *they went down living into Hades.*”<sup>\*</sup> Here we see that Hades received the bodies as well as the souls of the conspirators and their families. And, moreover, the *only unusual thing* in this occurrence was that Hades received them *alive* instead of, as was usual, dead. Hades, according to Moses, received the dead bodies of all men; only in the case of these conspirators God made a new thing, and they went *down alive into Hades*. We suppose that the faith of Job, of Jacob, and of Moses represents the faith of primitive times, from those of Adam to those of Moses: we suppose also that it represents the teaching of the Old Testament, at all events of the Pentateuch. That teaching is that *Hades receives the bodies of men in death, and that Hades is therefore identical with the grave.*

XX. He would be a bold man who would undertake to show that if Hades was identified with the grave in the Pentateuch it ceased to be identified with it in the later Scriptures of the Old Testament, and came there to represent a ghost-land of ghostly life, instead of the place of the worm and corruption. *Such a change* would involve an alteration of the very nature and constitution of man; would alter death from what it had been to something totally different: and we would therefore require evidence of the very highest kind ere we could possibly accept it. For, according to the teaching of the Pentateuch, Hades was the grave, where was no life; according to the new supposition, Hades was not the grave, but was a ghost land full of life. But so far from later Scriptures leading us to think that they in any degree modify, or change, or improve the idea of Hades given us by Job and Moses, those Scriptures only confirm and repeat the primitive idea.

XXI. The materialistic idea of Jacob and Moses, that Hades received the dead bodies of men, is repeated by David upon several occasions. It is true that our authorised version hides this teaching of the Psalmist from English readers by translating Sheol in these places by “the grave.” But when we tell them that in these passages David speaks of Sheol, or Hades, they will see that the translation only confirms our view that Sheol, or Hades, is indeed no other than the grave. In one place, David, speaking apparently of the near approach to death to which the plots of his enemies had brought him, says, “Our bones are scattered at the mouth of Hades.”<sup>†</sup> His idea was that the bones of the dead, *i.e.*, their dead bodies, were consigned in death to Hades. It was in his eyes no ghost-land where living shades flitted, and mimicked the affairs of this life. In his eyes, as in those of his predecessors, Hades was the grave. He expresses the same sentiment in different language elsewhere. He is on his death bed, and giving his parting advice to his son Solomon how he should deal with men who deserved to die, and who were at heart inimical to the establishment of Solomon on the throne. Speaking of Joab and of

<sup>\*</sup> Num. xvi. 30, 33.

<sup>†</sup> Psalm cxli. 7.



Shimei he counselled Solomon that he should not let their *hoar heads go down to Hades in peace.*"\* The body as well as the soul went, according to David, to Hades, *i.e.*, Hades was with him identical with the grave.

XXII. Let us now turn to the grand parable of Isaiah, which is by some supposed to teach us that Hades is the land of ghost-life, to which ghosts carry the memories and the thoughts of life on earth. As plainly as is possible, Isaiah here identified Hades with the grave, and imagines the dead raised to life in order to utter God's doom upon Babylon. He imagines the distinctions of this life transferred to Hades, and kings sitting there on thrones as they had sat in those royal palaces from which so many of them had been rudely ejected by the conquering arms of the great Nebuchadnezzar. He puts words of taunt and mocking into the mouths of these royal inhabitants of Hades. But all this was *imagery*. All this was an inspired poet creating one of the grandest odes that was ever written, to cast contempt upon the pride of Babylon, while yet its broad walls rose upon the plains of Chaldea, and its strong gates opened to let forth the fierce bands of conquerors who subdued the earth. But what was this Hades to which the old kings had descended, to which Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar would one day descend? *It was the grave.* What is it which these kings are made to say to the king of Babylon, and how do they describe their real condition? Thus: "Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to *Hades*, and the noise of thy viols; *the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.*"† In the mind of Isaiah, Hades was no other than the place where the worms revel on the dead, *i.e.*, it was no other place than the grave.

XXIII. We will draw attention to one other passage as showing that it was the uniform faith of the Jewish prophets that their Sheol or Hades was indeed no other than the grave. Ezekiel is describing the overthrow of Egypt by the sword of Babylon, and its consignment, together with that of other fallen peoples, to Hades. They are described there as "speaking out of the midst of Hades."‡ All through this grand picture of the overthrow of once-mighty peoples, Hades is described as no other than the grave, as containing within it all that the grave contains of man and of his pride. Indeed, all through this description by Ezekiel the very Hebrew word (*keber*), which is put for the grave, and which is by our Platonic divines supposed to be essentially distinct from Sheol or Hades, is expressly stated to be in Hades. "Asshur is there (*i.e.* in Hades) and all her company; *his graves* (Kibroth) are about him." (Verse 22.) The same expression is repeated in verses 23, 24, 25, 26. And what is in this Hades of Ezekiel? All the multitudes of the slain in the bloody wars of these ancient nations; the sword with which they smote each other; the weapons of war with which they attacked or defended; the bones

\* 1 Kings ii. 6—9.

† Isaiah xiv. 10, 11.

‡ Ezek. xxxii. 21—32.

which were all that remained when the pride of the warrior and his pomp and his strength were subdued by the stronger hand of death ! Are not these what go to the grave ? But according to Ezekiel they went to Hades, *i.e.*, according to Ezekiel, there was no distinction between Hades and the grave.

XXIV. We will only advert to one other consideration in order to show that the Old Testament identifies Hades with the grave. The Hebrew word *Sheol* is in the Old Testament identified with another Hebrew word, *Bor*, usually, though not, we think, always, translated "the pit." The identification of these two words is seen from passages in various places. One is that of Isaiah: "Thou shalt be brought down to *Hades*, to the sides of *the pit*." Here Hades and the pit are plainly identical. We refer below to other passages which establish the same identity.\* The primary meaning of this word *Bor* is a cistern hewn out for the reception of rain water. It hence came to signify a prison where criminals are confined. And it also came to signify as Fürst renders it, "*the pit in which the dead are laid up, the sepulchre.*" We must not weary our readers' attention with any minute examination of the passages which establish that the Old Testament, when it uses this word of the place where the dead are, does not use it for any Ghost land of living souls, but for the grave. "I am counted," says the Psalmist, "with them that go down into *the pit*. I am as a man that hath no strength. Free among the dead, *like the slain that lie in the grave.*"† Here *Bor*, the pit, is used as identical with the grave. A similar conclusion will follow from the examination of the passages to which we refer below.‡

XXV. We have established then, beyond any question, the fact that the Old Testament, so far from holding Hades to be a land of life of any kind or for any part of man, holds it to be a land of darkness, and silence, and death. Heathen poets and tragedians amused their fancies by pictures of Elysian fields within this earth, where the souls of the blessed dead sought relief from the tedium of existence in occupations as like to those of earth as their disembodied conditions would permit of. Something of what Plato sought vainly to establish by reason, the fancy of the Greek poets, copied by the Latin muse, eagerly laid hold of as a good ground-work for amusing the wits of Athens and of Rome, perusing their works at home, or assembled in the gay theatres of the capitals of wealth, power, and refinement. The introduction of heathen ideas among the Jewish people consequent on the conquest of Alexander, the incorporation of the Jews into the Grecian empire, and especially the residence of vast numbers of them in Alexandria, brought into the region of Jewish thought and speculation the heathen fancies of Elysium for righteous souls, and Tartarus for wicked souls, during the disembodied state.

\* Isaiah xiv. 15; Prov. i. 12; Ezek. xxxi. 16; Psalm lxxxviii. 3, 4.

† Psalm lxxxviii. 4, 5.

‡ Isaiah xiv. 19; Ezek. xxvi. 20; xxxi. 14; xxxii. 23.

But for all this, they had to travel beyond the region of their own holy books. The Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets ignored any such land as Pluto ruled within the heart of the earth. They knew of no ghost land for disembodied souls. With them death was truly death. With them, God carried out to the spirit and the letter the old sentence, which said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." They did not seek to evade this sentence of death, or to cast discredit upon the Word of Him whose spirit inspired them, by teaching that death was only a change of life, sometimes better, sometimes worse. The death which they taught was the death of Epicurus, and not of Plato: the end which Horace feared when he contemplated the two fleeting years, which brought him nigh the time when the gay genial satellite of Mæcenæ would be reduced to his dust and ashes. Where they departed from Epicurus and his sad school, and shone with a glory which Plato's brightest imaginations never approached, was where they pictured a *future resurrection life*, when they saw in rapt vision graves opening, and death's power broken, and the dead in the faith of the redeeming God of Israel rising up to a new eternal life.

The Old Testament uniformly tells us to look to the *resurrection* for redemption. It taught its disciples that the condition of righteous souls in Hades, so far from being one of joy and glory, was not one even of life. Deliverance from it was the faith of the Old Testament saint: deliverance from it was the promise of the Old Testament. "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul; oh, *save me* for Thy mercy's sake," was the cry from earth to heaven under the ancient dispensation; "for in death there is no remembrance of Thee: *in Hades who will give thee thanks?*" "*God will deliver my soul from the power of Hades*, for He shall receive me," was the hope and the faith of the ancient Church. "*Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades*," was the assurance with which they faced death, which else would have been to them a king unshorn of any of his terrors. And to this faith and hope, or rather as its groundwork and its base, came the promise of the covenant God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, "*I will ransom them from the power of Hades; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O Hades, I will be thy destruction.*" Philosophising Jews may have introduced a paradise and an Abraham's bosom into the dominion of Hades; but certainly the Old Testament did not. It casts no ray of light upon that dark region save such as arises from the dawning light of resurrection, which spoke of its gloom and its darkness, and its silence, and its death, for ever abolished for those who loved the God of salvation.

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## CHAPTER X.

## THE HADES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

I. WE have seen the view which the Old Testament gives us of Hades, as synonymous with the grave, as the region of death, as the receptacle of the body and soul of those who once had life but now are dead. We now proceed to consider the light in which the New Testament speaks of Hades.

II. And here we are met by an assertion, sometimes very confidently made, that since the resurrection of our Lord from the dead the souls of believers do not go to Hades at all, and that moreover our Lord descended to that region, probably during the period of his own lying in the grave, and did so for the purpose of bringing out of it the souls of all believers who had died before his resurrection. According to this opinion the souls of believers since Christ's resurrection, instead of going to that Hades to which the souls of believers before it went, ascend up to heaven, to where Christ is seated at the right-hand of God, and there, in the enjoyment of life and glory, await the period of resurrection, when they shall rejoin the bodies raised in incorruption. Hades, on this view, is only for wicked souls since the resurrection of Christ.

III. In proof of this several texts are confidently quoted from various places in the New Testament. We do not deny that some of these texts have much apparent force, or that if they existed alone the opinion above advocated would derive very strong support. The texts however having this apparent force, when viewed by themselves, *are exceedingly few in number*. We do not think that there are more than three or four verses in the whole range of the New Testament which seem to have real force in this direction. However, three or four verses are not to be disregarded, nor will we disregard them. We think it best, however, to present first the positive side of this question as it appears to us to be taught in Scripture. The only safe way of study, in our judgment, is first to take the general teaching of Scripture. If we come first to some particular passages, and refuse to go beyond them until we are fully satisfied of their meaning, we do not think any certainty can ever be attained on any subject in Scripture. Particular texts will ever appear to speak one way to one mind, and perhaps another way to another mind. If they will not leave this debatable ground unless they are agreed as to its special bearing upon this question, we believe they must only differ from each other for ever. The true way is to take the general sense and analogy of Scripture. This can only be taken by an extensive and painstaking research of it as a whole. This taken, they will bring it to bear upon



the disputed passages, and surely, if we believe in the plenary inspiration of the Bible, we will be compelled to see that the general sense of Scripture must rule the interpretation of a few disputed passages. This shall be our mode of action. We will first present what appears to us the general sense of Scripture, and with it in our possession we shall expect to have the only key that can unlock the sense of the disputed places.

IV. The proposition then which we propose to establish in this chapter is that believers since the resurrection of Christ go to Hades exactly as they did before that event; that they do not consequently ascend to heaven on death, either in soul or body, but still, in a condition of entire death, await the second coming of Christ and the Resurrection in order to enter on and enjoy life of any kind. Our proposition is that Hades is for believers since Christ's Resurrection exactly what it was for believers before it.

V. If the reasoning of our last chapter be correct, it by itself decides this entire question. *If Hades be*, as we there showed, *identical with the grave*, there can be no doubt that Hades still exists in full power for believers in Christ, since no one contends for a moment that the grave has been abolished for believers in Christ, or will be abolished until the day of resurrection. The identity of Hades and the grave proves beyond any question that Hades exists in power for believers since Gospel times as much as it did for believers before them. They who would uphold the contrary must first overthrow the reasoning of our last chapter.

VI. They must also do a great many other things which we utterly defy them to do. They must prove that death since the resurrection of Christ means a very different thing from what it meant before His resurrection. Death, before the resurrection, meant the going of the body and the soul to Hades or the grave. Death, if this opinion be true, must mean the going of the body to the grave, and the ascending of the soul to heaven. One of the most important words in Scripture, one of the most commonly used, one on which all reasoning as to the redemption of Christ must rest, must be thus shown to have two distinct senses in different parts of God's word. All through the Old Testament, and up to the time of our Lord's resurrection, it had one well-known, well-established, uniform sense. Since that event it came to have a widely different sense! Who can credit such a thing? Who can admit a view which would involve such embarrassment? Are we to suppose that death means one thing in the epistles of Paul, and another in the writings of the Prophets? But Paul himself will admit of no such thing. He freely quotes the prophets speaking of death, and he never allows us to suppose for one moment that he means one thing and they another. The death which Paul declared would be abolished was the very same death which Isaiah and Hosea declared would be abolished.\* And we therefore utterly reject a

\* 1 Cor. xv. 54; Hos. xlii. 14; Isa. xxv. 8.

theory which would make death a different thing in different parts of the word of God. That word throughout speaks of it as one and the same thing; and we utterly repudiate a theory for which it affords not one solitary word of countenance. Death is throughout Scripture the same thing, and therefore wherever the souls of believers went before the resurrection of Christ, there they have gone since.\*

VII. Again, this theory lies open to the fatal objection that it not only alters the meaning of death in the two great divisions of the Scripture, but that it virtually abolishes death for the believer. God said to Adam, and through him to all born from him, "in the day that thou eatest thou shalt die:" and Paul declares that the consequences of Adam's sin have visited all mankind, believers and unbelievers alike. Satan contradicted God, and said that man would not die.† Now really we must say that a theory which teaches that man in what is called death only changes life here for a better life in heaven, denies that the man who has made this change has truly died. It is true he says that the body dies. He makes this out, however, to be a positive advantage to the man. But *the true man*, the soul, has not, according to him, *died at all*. It left a clog and a mar to enter upon a far better and more glorious life. The theory we oppose is a theory which holds that believers do not truly die, when the Bible says they do truly die.

VIII. Again, this theory lies open to the grave objection that it supposes death to produce *two persons out of one*. We hope we shall be excused when we say that, on the authority of Scripture, *the man, the person in death rests in the grave*. Our opponents may repeat a hundred times the saying—"Oh, *the body* is in the grave!" But we will say what Scripture, whenever it speaks, says, that *the man is in the grave*: "devout men carried *Stephen* to his burial, and made great lamentation *over him*."‡ Well, then, we have, on the authority of Scripture, one person in the grave. But here comes the theory we oppose, and says, the same person is in heaven! Then there are two persons made out of one. There is one Stephen in the grave: and there is a second Stephen in heaven: and still, there is but one Stephen after all! But where does the Bible tell us that death converts one man into two? And certainly, unless it does, we are called upon in the name of our common reason to reject a palpable absurdity. We are glad that Scripture nowhere calls upon us to accept such contradictions.

IX. But Scripture itself disavows such a theory. In their endeavour to escape from the palpable absurdity of creating two persons out of one by the operation of death, the theorists we contend against assert that there is truly but *one person*. The body, they say, is laid aside for the time, and is not the man: the soul on death is the true person or man. Now we leave these theorists to *explain away* the

\* Rom. v. 12—14.

† Gen. iii. 4.

‡ Acts viii. 2.

numberless Scriptures which speak of man as laid in the grave, and turn to their theory that there is but one true man, the surviving soul. The surviving soul, they say, *has gone to heaven*. Then according to them, *the true man has gone to heaven*; Paul has gone to heaven, and John, and all the rest of the true believers! But what says Scripture? Speaking of one of the most eminent believers, one who since the resurrection of Christ has, according to our theorists, been taken out of Hades and brought up to heaven, inspired Peter, speaking of him *after the resurrection of Christ*, said: "*David is not ascended into the heavens.*"\* What are our theorists to do with this passage? How are they to explain it away? They say, "*Oh, David here means David's body!*" Well, what of that? Do they not see that in saying so they only overthrow their own house of cards? If David means David's body, then David's body means David: *i.e.*, Scripture obstinately persists in calling that body David which these men say is not David at all. If the soul of David on death were truly David, and if this soul had ascended into heaven, then it would be true that David had ascended into heaven. But Scripture denies that he has so ascended, and in so doing insists that the body of David in the grave was David himself. If we will accept Scripture, the soul is not the man, but is the life of the man. When the man has it he is a living man, and when he is without it he is a dead man. But to separate the man or person from the body, Scripture does not permit us for a moment to do.

X. But, leaving those contradictions in which the theory we speak of involves its supporters, we will go to the plain testimony of the New Testament. We will show these two things: first, that the New Testament teaches us that Hades exists for believers since Christ's resurrection just as it existed for believers before that event: secondly, that the New Testament gives us exactly the same view of it that the Old did, *viz.*, as a place of death, and the receptacle of the dead bodies of men, *i.e.*, as identical with the grave.

XI. We think it is to be taken as an indisputable fact, readily proved from the general testimony of Scripture, that the death of Christ was in every respect identical with the death which all His people die, since His resurrection as before. He tasted our death for us all. We do not think it here requisite to establish this from reference to special texts. Scripture throughout speaks of His death and that of His people as one and the same, and it is incumbent on those who would maintain any material distinction between the two to prove it by direct testimony of Scripture. In one respect only, and that respect does not concern the nature of His death but its duration only, did the death of Christ differ from ours. It was that it should continue for so short a time that his flesh should not see corruption. Yet this even was especially noted in prophecy.† But, in the proper elements of death, itself the death of Christ was the very

\* Acts ii. 34.

† Ps. xvi. 10.

same as that of all His people. It follows therefore, in direct and essential consequence, that as it was a main part of His death that His soul went to Hades, and remained there until His resurrection, so it is a main part of the death of all His people, from the beginning to the end of this age, that their souls go on death to Hades and remain there till resurrection.

XII. But the nature of resurrection, as it is expressly defined in Holy Scripture, proves beyond a doubt that the soul of every one of Christ's people is in Hades up to that event. What is meant by resurrection in Scripture? Let us hear the Apostle Peter defining it on the day of Pentecost. It is not merely raising the body out of the grave, but it is also bringing the soul out of Hades. Peter's words are—"He, seeing this before, spake of the *resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades*, neither His flesh did see corruption."\* It will perhaps be replied that Peter here only speaks of the *resurrection of Christ*, and that consequently his definition of resurrection need not apply to that of His people. But this answer does not suit the case, for we are expressly told in many Scriptures that the resurrection of Christ is identical with that of His believing people.† But since they are identical it follows that on resurrection the souls of His people come out of Hades just as the soul of Christ did on His. It is strange doctrine which would teach that believers since the resurrection of Christ resemble their Lord neither in death nor resurrection.

XIII. But the Apostle Paul in his description of the *resurrection of believers* in 1 Cor. xv., expressly tells us that Hades continues to keep its victory over them until the period of their resurrection, *i.e.*, until the second coming of Christ. It is indeed sad to hear good men asserting of death what Paul says of resurrection from death. How constantly is it said when a good man dies,—“O Death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is the victory?”‡ But what mistaken Platonic divines teach of death, Paul does not allow to be true until the resurrection from the dead. When does Paul tell us the victory of Hades over the people of God is exchanged for its defeat? It is “when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality,” it is “*then*” and not before that the victory of Hades over believers is changed into its defeat. Paul here, then, does not allow us to believe that the people of Christ are free from Hades since his resurrection; they have in his resurrection the pledge of their freedom from it, but the freedom itself they will not obtain until their own resurrection. If we are content, then, to follow the teaching of St. Paul, we must hold that the theory which tells us that the souls of believers since the resurrection of Christ do not go on death to Hades, but go to heaven to the right hand of God, is a mere dream of man, a poetic fiction derived from Plato but not from the Bible. The case of believers since Christ's resurrection will, of course, deter-

\* Acts ii. 31.

† Rom. vi. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 20.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.



mine another point sometimes put forward, but which we will not take the trouble specially to discuss, as it is determined by the case before us. It is with reference to believers before the resurrection of Christ, of whom it is sometimes said that the Lord at His resurrection took them out of Hades, just as He did not allow believers since that to enter it at all. If believers since Christ's resurrection go to Hades, of course no one will contend that believers before it were taken out of it. Indeed we know of no earlier authority for this fiction than the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus. Such are the sources of too many of the opinions which now are accepted truths in Christendom.\*

XIV. The effort recently made to get rid of Paul's testimony here, by saying that Hades is an error in the manuscript, and that the word used by the apostle was "death" (*thanatos*), is wholly unavailing. The great preponderance of authority is on the side of the reading of Hades. But we have in the nature of the passage itself full proof, if manuscript authority were insufficient, that Hades is the word used by the apostle. The passage fortunately is, as every annotator allows, borrowed from Hosea xiii. 14, with just so much change of language as to suit the place in the chapter in Corinthians. The sentiment and idea of Hosea, the structure of the sentence, and, so far as the place would admit of, the very words themselves, are borrowed by Paul from the prophet Hosea. Hosea's words are, "O Death, I will be thy plagues; O Hades, I will be thy destruction:" which Paul plainly copies in the paraphrase,—“O Death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory?” To suppose that Paul in this passage departs from the sentiment and meaning of Hosea is perfectly inadmissible, and therefore Hades must have been the word he used.

XV. Paul's teaching in 1 Cor. xv. is reiterated by our Lord Himself in the Book of Revelation. He is comforting His apostle John, overcome by His divine presence. His words of comfort are,—“Fear not; I am the first and the last. I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of *Hades and of death*.”† The teaching of Christ here is very plain. He refers to His own death, when His body was in the grave and His soul in Hades. He refers to His own resurrection, when His body left the grave and His soul was delivered from Hades. He does this to comfort the mind of His apostle John, and so of all believers, that what He had done for Himself He would do for them. He conveys this comfort in the words, “*I have the keys of Hades and of death*.” What is this but saying, “I will open Hades and the grave for My people, even as I opened them for Myself?” And hence we are taught that for believers in Christ since His resurrection, Hades still has the very same existence and power that it ever had, that it as truly reigns over them as death reigns. The words of Christ are but

\* Gospel of Nicodemus. Clarke's Ante-Nicene Library, pp. 173, 174.

† Rev. i. 18.

the reiteration of the sentiment of Paul,—“O Death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory?” The sting of death would be removed, and the victory of Hades changed into defeat, when, in the morning of resurrection, Christ uses the keys of death and Hades, and lets his prisoners of hope free for ever.

XVI. And now, having shown from the New Testament that Hades continues to receive the souls of believers since the resurrection of Christ, just as it received them before that event, we will proceed to show that so far as its notices of Hades extend, it gives us the very same idea of it that the Old Testament gave us, viz., as a place of death, and as identical with the grave. As the allusions to Hades in the New Testament are very few in comparison to the number of allusions to it in the Old, we cannot, of course, expect so much information about it. In truth it was not wanted. The Old Testament had fully informed its readers about Hades. If there had been any change made in Hades, then, it would have been the part of the New Testament to speak fully and explicitly of this change. But where no change was made, there was no room in the New Testament for any further information where the fullest had been already given. We accordingly find no *descriptions* in the New Testament of Hades, such as we find repeatedly in the Old. In but *eleven* places does the New Testament allude to Hades. The references to it in the Old are six-fold more numerous. Yet in these few references we find allusions to Hades of such a kind as show beyond any question that in the mind of the Spirit which inspired the writing of the New Testament, Hades was the very same place and state since the resurrection of Christ that it was before.

XVII. In no less than three places out of the eleven where it occurs, Hades is associated with death exactly as we saw it to be in the Old Testament. “I looked,” says John, “and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hades followed with him.” And in the same way we find Death and Hades twice afterwards associated together in this book.\* So far from life being associated in the New Testament with Hades, Death is its corresponding idea. But we have in one of these passages if possible a plainer testimony to the truth of our view. In the account of the judgment which precedes the aspect of the “new heaven and the new earth” of the eternal age, we read that “*the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and Hades delivered up the dead which were in them.*”† Even from this passage, as it occurs in our Authorised Version, we could show, as we showed from repeated passages in the Old Testament, that Hades is the receptacle of the *dead bodies* of men as well as of their souls—i.e., identical with the grave. For Hades contains the dead *even as the sea contains the dead*. Now we suppose that every one will allow that what the sea contains are the *dead bodies* of those who have been drowned in it. If so, then *Hades also contains dead*

\* Rev. vi. 8 : xx. 13, 14.

† Rev. xx. 13.

*bodies.* But what our translation only enables us to gather by induction, the Greek of the Apocalypse, if properly translated, expressly states. We suppose that our translators did not well see how *they* could place dead bodies in Hades. Hades was with them the receptacle of souls in a condition of full sensation and life. Accordingly they shroud the original Greek under the expression "the dead," which they think may both cover the dead bodies in the sea and the living souls in Hades because these latter had once belonged to the dead bodies. But the Greek word here used, *nekros*, signifies properly and primarily a *dead body*. So it is used throughout the New Testament,\* except on some rare occasions where it is used in a secondary and figurative sense for the dead in sin.† Its use in this secondary sense is indicated by the context, for the phrase is always applied to persons known to be possessed of physical life. But when not thus used it signifies a dead body. The senses Liddell and Scott's Dictionary gives for the term are: 1. "a dead body, a corse;" 2. "a dead man as opposed to one alive." It gives no other sense for the word used as a noun. Its meaning then is the dead body of a man. But Hades, according to John, contains dead bodies of men, and therefore Hades is with him identical with the grave. We thus see, what we might have expected to see, that Hades in the New Testament is the same as Hades, or Sheol, in the Old: that it means the grave; that it contains the bodies as well as the souls or lives of men, of the just as of the unjust, that it is the region of death.

We cannot leave the subject of this chapter without adverting for a moment to an objection confidently made at times against our entire argument. It is this. Hades is a Greek word. It is said then that in the Greek language it has one primary invariable meaning, viz., a place of departed living souls. Such, it is said, would be the meaning which every Greek speaker would, as a matter of course, apply to it when used. Hence it is asserted that when we find it in the Septuagint used as the translation for the Hebrew Sheol, and when we find it used in the New Testament, we are to take it in its invariable sense, and that consequently the use of this term at all indicates that the souls in Hades were alive.

Now, certainly, if Hades had in the Greek language but one meaning, and if the above were that meaning, there would be considerable, if not absolutely conclusive, force in this argument. But a little consideration will show us that we cannot by any possibility suppose that either the original or the invariable sense of Hades was a place of living souls.

Hades was a term in use in the Greek language from the time of the formation of that language. It was in use as long as the word *psyche*, or soul, was in use. It was on all hands allowed that on death the soul went down to Hades. It will, therefore, appear

\* Matt. x. 8; Mark xii. 26; Luke. vii 22; John xii. 1; Acts. v. 10; Rom. iv. 24.

† Matt. viii. 22; Luke xv. 24.

evident that on the meaning attached by a Greek speaker to the term soul, on what he supposed would happen to the soul on death, would be his meaning for that Hades to which the soul went. If the Greek speaker supposed that the soul survived death, and went to Hades, he would mean by Hades a place of living souls; if he did not believe that the soul survived death he could not possibly have supposed Hades to be a place of living souls, but must have identified it with the grave.

Now, on this plain ground, we insist that the original sense of the word Hades with Greek speakers did not mean a place of living souls, for the simple reason that the original belief of Greece, as at all times the prevalent belief amongst its educated classes at least, was that the soul was mortal, and did not survive bodily dissolution. For this we have as good a testimony as we need desire in the Grecian historian Herodotus. He tells us that the original faith of Greece was that the soul was mortal: that the idea of its immortality was derived from Egypt: he tells us that he knows the names of the first Greeks who introduced the novel idea: while he leads us to the opinion that it was in his time an idea by no means generally received. His words are:—" *The Egyptians are the first of mankind who have defended the immortality of the soul.* They believe that, on the dissolution of the body the soul immediately enters some other animal, and that, after using as vehicles every species of terrestrial, aquatic, and winged creatures, it finally enters a second time into a human body. This opinion *some among the Greeks* have at different periods of time adopted as their own; but I shall not, although I am able, specify their names." \*

Now it is quite plain from this, that Greece originally held no such doctrine as that the soul of man survived his body, and Herodotus leads us very plainly to see that he held no such idea himself. In the time of Socrates and Plato we see that it was not a *general* opinion, for the entire argument of Socrates in the *Phædo* is to convince his friends of this very matter, upon which they were, at least, very sceptical. But hence it follows, as a necessary consequence, that Hades did not *originally* signify with any Greek speaker a place of living souls, and that such was never its universal sense. We have no doubt that originally it meant the grave: that it came next to signify the God of Death, Pluto: and that, by a further modification, it was supposed to signify Pluto's realm, where he was supposed to rule over shadowy souls, in some sort of existence. In those latter senses the word is usually used by the Grecian poets, to whom it afforded a lively exercise for their imagination, though few of them probably believed a word of what they said about it. We have in existence but very few Greek writings in prose where we find the term used. Had we the writings of Epicurus, we would doubtless find it used by him as equivalent to the grave. As it is, it is difficult

\* Herodotus, *Euterpe*, cxxxiii.



to find places where it is thus used. There are, however, some ; and writers of the first authority in the Greek language acknowledge that the grave is a true and proper sense for Hades in Greek.

The first Greek classical dictionary of the present day is that of Liddell and Scott. It gives the following as the meanings for Hades: "In Homer, Pluto, the God of the nether world; 2, the nether world, *the grave, death.*" The only lexicon specially applied to the Septuagint Greek is that of Schleusner. It gives the grave as one of the meanings of Hades. It explains the expression "*Oi en Aidou,*" as "*qui sunt in domo sepulchri,*" "those who are in the house of the grave." Archbishop Ussher, whose learning is undoubted, and who does not at all agree with our view of Hades as the grave, is yet compelled to acknowledge that it is constantly used by Greek writers in that sense. Thus in one passage in his *Answer to a Jesuit*, chap. viii., he says: "As for the Greek word Hades, it is used by Hippocrates to express the first matter of things, from which they have their beginning, *and into which afterwards, being dissolved, they make their ending.*" This is very different from the idea that Hades meant with all Greek writers a place of living souls. Hippocrates held the Epicurean view, and makes Hades to be that lifeless substance out of which he supposes man to have been made, and to which he thought he would return in death for ever, being annihilated. In another passage Ussher says that Hades "is taken for a tomb in that place of Pindarus. Other sacred kings have gotten a tomb apart by themselves before the houses, or before the gates of the city. And therefore we see that *Aidas* is by Suidas, in his lexicon, expressly interpreted *O taphos*, and by Hesychius *tumbos taphos*, a tomb, or a grave." In another place, referring to several passages in the Old Testament, Ussher says, "In these places where in the Hebrew is Sheol, in the Greek Hades, in the Latin Inferni, or Inferi, in the English Hell, *the place of dead bodies*, and not of souls, *is to be understood.*" To the examples of the use of Hades for the grave given by Ussher we will only add one more. It is from Æschines, Agam. 678: *Aden pontion pefeugontes*, "having escaped a watery Hades, or grave."

It is sometimes said, in opposition to our view, that if Hades meant "the grave," we should sometimes read of a Hades of brick, marble, &c., and also that we should find it often in the plural number. This objection is readily disposed of. Hades is, at least generally, used in Greek as a *generic term*, i.e., as a term comprehending under it a variety of species or kinds. It is used precisely as its English equivalent, "the grave," is used when this latter term is supposed to signify, not any particular grave, but *the state of sepulture in general*. When "the grave" is thus used as a generic term, it is never spoken of as made of this material or that, because it comprises tombs or graves of whatever material they are composed: neither is it, when thus used generically, ever used in the plural.

Just so, since Hades is in the Greek a generic term, at least generally such, we do not when it is so used read of it as composed of any particular material, nor do we find it in the plural number. But we are far from saying that it might not at times be so used. We should say that Pindar would certainly, if asked, have told us of what material the royal Hades, or tomb, was composed which he speaks of as before the houses.

There is, then, nothing in the usage of the Greek word Hades to prevent our giving it the meaning which we see given to it in Scripture, viz., *the grave*.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### DEATH.

I. FROM all our previous chapters it will be seen what death means in the mind of Scripture. Inflicted in punishment of sin, and to mark God's great abhorrence of it, it is certainly a calamity of no mean kind. Such a calamity the theory we advocate as that of Scripture makes it indeed to be. If life, as given by God to man, was a priceless blessing, death, which is the deprivation of this life, is an incalculable loss. The life which God gave at first to man, we must remember, was not such a life as He gave to beasts, who, by the primal law of their nature, must die, but was a life which, if man had obeyed God, would have had no end. The death which cuts short such a life is, indeed, a terrible penalty. And if we examine what Scripture tells us of death, we shall see that, in the eyes of God, it is regarded as such. The living God, the eternal of days, regards, in this light, the loss of a life which might have been like His. We do not think it needful to dwell more upon the truth that the death, which God inflicted upon the human race for Adam's sin, was a great calamity for all who should endure it.

II. Whatever this death be, it is the uniform teaching of Scripture that all the sons of men, however they may differ in character, or whatever may be their relation to God, do really and truly suffer and endure it. There is not in Scripture, from its first page to its last, one text which tells us that any covenant of God with man subsequent to the fall, any gospel of grace in a Saviour, relieved mankind, or any portion of mankind, from suffering that death which God threatened, when He said to Adam, "*In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*" It would, indeed, shake our faith in the stability of God's Word, in His promises as well as in His threatenings, if we were to admit that a threatening so solemnly, and, we must suppose, so deliberately made by God, at the outset of human life, was set aside. In what other pledge of God could we

possibly trust if we saw that this, His first solemn covenant, were not kept by Him? How could the believer trust His Word for life eternal, why should the wicked man dread His threat of the second death, if both could point to a word, as solemnly passed as that of life eternal to the just, and everlasting death to the wicked, broken for any reason? There was no intimation given that it would be altered. They who urge that redemption made either a total or a partial change in the nature of that death, which God threatened as the penalty of sin, must allow that there might be, perhaps, some after-change of mind and purpose on His part towards men, other than He has spoken of in the revelation of His purposes both towards the redeemed and the lost. The idea that the redemption of Christ Jesus altered, in any respect, the nature of the death threatened to Adam, or exempted any of those originally contemplated as affected by it from enduring it, would shake our confidence in every word of God. In God's character, as one who cannot lie, we ground our faith that *all* which was necessarily included in the threat, "In the day that thou eatest thou shalt die," did actually and truly take place in the case of Adam and all his descendants, included with their father in this first covenant of God with man. We can no more allow one covenant of God to be broken than another. One rests on the same foundation that another rests on. If one is broken the confidence in another is justly shaken. If God broke or departed from His covenant in Adam, what is to hinder his departing from his covenant in Christ? That immutability of God, on which Scripture teaches us unwaveringly to rest, would be shown by such a course to be but mutability like that of our own frail race.

III. But what we would insist on with absolute confidence from our knowledge of God's character—what we would insist on as requisite to inspire the believer with any good trust, or the wicked with any well-founded alarm, is expressly told us in God's Word. There we are told that *the death threatened to Adam has fallen upon Adam and upon all his sons*. We suppose that one text from Paul will be enough to quote for this purpose: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men."\* With this text of Paul every other scripture harmonises: against its evident sense we defy all opponents to advance a single passage. Its teaching is this—that *the death—the very death—not part of it, but all of it, which God said He would inflict He has inflicted. Death has passed upon all men.*

IV. A very considerable amount of false theology, manufactured for the purpose of supporting Plato's fiction of the immortality of the soul, flies away before this simple truth. All that theology which tells us that God, by reason of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, did not inflict the death which He said He would inflict, or that He inflicted part of it, and did not inflict the rest, or that He exempted one por-

\* Rom. v. 12.

tion of men from this death, either in whole or in part, all this theology flies into thinnest air before the simple truth, that the death which God threatened He actually inflicts upon all men. How great this amount of theology is, any one acquainted with theological works of almost every school will readily see.

V. We now come to a very important question, viz., *the duration of that death threatened to the race of men*. Now it is to be remarked, in the threatening of God to Adam, that *not one word is said upon the point of duration*. "In the day that thou eatest, thou shalt die," is the penalty denounced. A death from which there would be no deliverance, *i.e.*, an eternal death, or a death from which there would be deliverance, *i.e.*, temporal death, are both equally suitable to the penalty denounced. It only speaks of the infliction of death; it does not speak as to whether this death would continue for ever, or last only for a time, either on all or some whom it would affect. It is evident that in this omission, a designed one we may be certain, God left Himself open to all that provision of subsequent grace in Christ which He purposed before sin entered at all. All that we can argue with any certainty from the enunciation of the penalty is that death, in its true and full import, with no diminution of its meaning, should pass upon all without exception. We could not argue that it should abide on all, or any, for any longer or shorter period. It might, by some subsequent provision, be removed from all whom it affected, or it might be removed from some only, according as it should please God. Death might continue in some, or in all, for a short time, or a longer time, or for ever. All that we can require from the covenant in Adam is that *it passes upon all men*.

VI. And here a very important question arises, viz.—When did the death threatened to Adam *begin*? We can have no hesitation in saying that it began the very day and hour, speaking most literally, in which Adam sinned. We must accept this upon God's Word—*"in the day that thou eatest thou shalt surely die."*

VII. Regarding the death here spoken of as that death which all men, whether redeemed by Christ or not, endure, we suppose that it commenced on the day when Adam sinned, *because he then fell under the sentence of death*. We are quite satisfied that when God came to Adam after his transgression, and said to him, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," He did but pass the sentence which He had threatened in the words "in the day thou eatest thou shalt die." It is true that the penalty was not then executed, but in the eye of law a penalty is supposed to take effect from the time that sentence to it is pronounced by the Judge.

VIII. We have an excellent illustration of this principle of law in the treatment of Shimei by King Solomon. (1 Kings ii. 36—46.) In language almost identical with that spoken by God to Adam, Solomon warned the false and crafty old man that "on the day" when he should transgress the King's commandment not to go out of



Jerusalem he should "surely die." When Solomon spoke this he must have also known that the execution of this sentence would in all probability be impossible on the very day that Shimei should offend, for in offending he put himself for the moment out of reach of the ministers of justice. Shimei, in fact, had time to leave Jerusalem, execute the purpose for which he left it, and return before word of his leaving at all had been brought to the king (40, 41). His departure and absence were in all likelihood kept as secret as possible for fear of the consequences which might ensue. But though a period certainly of several days, if not weeks, had elapsed since Shimei had transgressed, Solomon considered that the threat he had held out to him was fully kept. He recalls to Shimei his words—"Know for a certain, on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, thou shalt surely die." (42.) He considered these words were completely accomplished in the fact that on the day that Shimei transgressed he fell under a sentence which was not executed for some time after. Such is the principle of all law. The criminal sentenced to death is looked upon as dead in the eye of the law, though days, or weeks, or months may elapse before the sentence takes its full effect. Mr. Dixon in his work on *Her Majesty's Tower* has a passage which illustrates admirably this legal principle. Speaking of Traitors' Gate he says, "Beneath this arch has moved a long procession of our proudest peers, our fairest women, our bravest soldiers, our wittiest poets. Most of them left it, high in rank and rich in life, to return by the same dark passage, in a few brief hours, poorer than the beggars who stood shivering on the bank, *in the eyes of the law, and in the words of their fellows, already dead.*" (i. 29.) And in conformity with this principle Paul speaks of himself as "having the sentence of death in himself." (2 Cor. i. 9.) The death threatened for original transgression did actually take effect upon the day of the transgression in that then, and therein, the irrevocable sentence of death was passed on Adam and his race.

IX. From that very day preparation was made for the execution of the sentence. On that day Adam was sent forth from the garden where grew that tree of life the eating of whose fruit would have perpetuated his life for ever. He is cut off from the channel through which immortality was to flow in upon him. He is left to the natural mortality of every creature not permanently sustained by the enduring life of God. Death is thenceforward coming surely upon him. He dies daily: his sands of life are falling through the hour-glass of existence.

X. But not only must the sentence be passed, and the preparations made for executing it, but it must also be actually put into full execution. As in Shimei's case Solomon's threat would have been falsified if he had not actually been put to death, so it would have been in man's case if he did not actually die. If Shimei had never returned to Jerusalem, if he had fled into some land beyond Solomon's

jurisdiction, as Jeroboam afterwards did, and so escaped the sentence of the law, then Solomon's threat would have been vain. The sentence of death, the assurance that if he ever came within the jurisdiction of Solomon, it would be executed, this, by itself, would not have been enough. He must *die by the command of the King*, in order to carry out the sentence "in the day that thou passest over the brook Kidron thou shalt surely die." So it must be with man. He must actually die, and not merely have sentence of death passed upon him, in order that God's words should be proved true, "in the day that thou eatest thou shalt die."

Man, then, is under the sentence of death, even while he is yet alive: he suffers this sentence when he actually dies: we inquire how long the death executed lasts? On one point we are certain, from the express testimony of Scripture, and this is the point which is of moment in our present question. It is, that the death executed upon the people of God lasts in force until their resurrection to eternal life. This is placed beyond question by the general tenor of Scripture, and by special texts. Death is said to "reign from Adam to Moses" over those whom it had conquered.\* It is, therefore, *no momentary triumph*. Paul tells us that it reigns over believers until the day of their resurrection.† From the day, then, on which they die, up to the day when they are raised up, death rules over the people of God.

XI. The other question connected with this point is one of deep interest and importance to the theological inquirer, though it is not of importance in the inquiry before us, viz., how long the death inflicted on man for Adam's sin *rules over the lost*? It certainly rules until their resurrection. But may it not also still be said to rule even after that? We are strongly inclined to think that it may. The unredeemed cannot be said ever to have passed from under the sentence of death pronounced upon Adam. "Ye will not come to Me," saith Christ to such, "that ye may have life."‡ Consequently, they would seem to have been still under the full sentence of the original penalty. And again, John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother *abideth in death*."§ Hence it would appear to us that the unbeliever has never passed from under the sentence of the original transgression even when he shall have been raised from the dead to the resurrection of damnation, and that, consequently, what is called the second death in hell is only carrying out the execution of the original sentence, unrelieved by redemption, while in the resurrection of the wicked is afforded room for the execution of Divine Justice on sins actually committed by them.

XII. But, however this may be, and important as such a point is to other questions, it does not, that we see, affect our present purpose.

\* Rom. v. 14.

† 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.

‡ John v. 40.

§ 1 John iii. 14.

For that it is sufficient to say that death rules in its full, unbroken, power over both the just and the unjust until the period of their resurrection, and that death during this period is the very same thing both to one and the other.

XIII. Now this fact, established beyond a question on the authority of Scripture, is of primary importance in this inquiry. It confirms most powerfully all that we have said as to the entire intermediate state of man being one of loss of all existence, both of soul and body, and it exhibits the popular theory of death as diametrically opposed to the teaching of Scripture. If death reigns until the period of resurrection, and if death is during this period exactly the same thing to the just and to the unjust, it follows beyond any question, that both just and unjust are then wholly and altogether dead. For no one contends that during this period the just are in a condition of misery: neither does any one contend that the unjust are in a condition of bliss: but that condition which is neither one of bliss nor misery, must be a condition of death, or non-existence. This is the one condition which can be common to the redeemed and the lost.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### POPULAR THEOLOGY ON DEATH.

I. WE may pause for a few moments here to compare popular theology upon the subject of death, with the view of it derived from Scripture. In its main features we have seen that Scripture teaches us that death to man is the loss by man of his soul or life: that death visits every child of man irrespective of his character, and reigns in full power from at least the period of his death to that of his resurrection; that death is a curse and an enemy, not a blessing in itself; and that what Scripture tells us of death, it tells us in no doubtful, obscure hesitating language, but speaks throughout as if it were thoroughly acquainted with what death was, and meant that man, to whom it speaks, should understand it clearly too.

II. In this chapter we propose to show that popular theology is utterly at variance with Scripture upon all these points, and speaks a confused, barbarous, uncertain language in consequence. For this purpose we will refer to the opinions of men who represent, and who are acknowledged as representing, the popular mind of Christendom upon this point. And, before entering upon these views, we will just remind our readers that a *Platonic dogma*, generally accepted, is the cause of all the contradiction of Scripture, and all the confusion of thought which so widely prevail. That Platonic dogma is that *the soul survives death, and is in this separate state the man*. The immortality of the soul is the source of the wide-spread errors on the inter-

mediate state, as it is the source of the errors of Origen and Augustine on the nature of future punishment. But here we must include in our condemnation very many of those who agree with us in our views on the latter question. What we *now* mean by the immortality of the soul is not the opinion that it will never die at any future time in hell, but the opinion that it does not die at the period of the first death, and survives the body throughout the intermediate or Hades state, and at the resurrection of the body rejoins its own old companion, having never, up to that time, died itself. There are very many who believe that the soul will die in the scene of punishment, subsequent to resurrection, who do not believe that it dies before. These we hold to be erroneous, as well as those who hold that the soul will never die in hell. It is the soul's survival of the first death, which is the main point in question throughout this book.

III. We have seen it to be the teaching of Scripture that death, *i.e.*, loss of life, visits all descended from Adam, irrespective of their character. *Popular theology denies that there is any such thing as death at all.* It says that no man dies, no man suffers the loss of life. A word, Death, has so got into common use that it cannot be extirpated, but this word has no real meaning, or if it has any real meaning, it means that to which it is thought to be the opposite,—*Life*. We affirm that popular theology denies the fact of death: denies that any man dies: that any man suffers the loss of life at that period denominated his death. God says that all men die, popular theology says that no man dies.

IV. This it does by its definition of what man truly and properly is. We cannot be esteemed as taking unsuitable representations of the theology of Christendom upon this point, when we take Bishop Butler, the author of the "Analogy," and John Wesley, the founder of the great Methodist Churches, as its representatives. We will first give Wesley's definition of man, and then draw more particular attention to Butler's Chapter on a *Future Life*. The views of two of England's master-minds are perfectly agreed upon this point.

V. "I am now," says John Wesley, speaking of human nature and of that event commonly called death, "I am now an immortal spirit, strangely commingled with a little portion of earth; but this is only for awhile. In a short time I am to quit this tenement of clay, and remove into another state."\* Here Wesley lays down that man is truly and properly an "immortal spirit." That is his nature and his essence. That is the person, the I, the man. That human nature which God defined as "earth," and "dust and ashes," Wesley defines as "immortal spirit." He acknowledges some relation to the "earth" of which God speaks, but it is only the relationship of a temporary connection, somewhat like what a man has to his house or his coat. This connection is dissolved at death. *The man* lays aside the "little portion of earth" with which he has strangely, and for a time

\* *The Rainbow*, 1871, p. 177.



commingled, and goes into another state. *The man*, according to Wesley, *does not die*. Death is nothing more than laying aside a garment unfit for use. *For man*, according to the great founder of Methodism, *there is no death*. For Paul's version "death passes upon all men," Wesley substitutes "death passes upon no man."

VI. What Wesley expresses as his faith Bishop Butler in the first chapter of his grand work laboriously argues. Butler's was one of the profoundest minds that England ever has produced, and *The Analogy of Religion* is one of those works of which any Church or any nation may be proud. It formed a portion of our own theological course, nor was there any portion of that course in which we took so much pleasure as in following the argument of "The Analogy." But when looking back upon a period of our life, now far removed, we well remember that we were never satisfied with the reasoning of his opening chapter "Of a Future Life." Even when it never occurred to us to doubt what he sought to prove, and when those views of the future of man which we have since learned from Scripture had not dawned upon us, we never felt assured upon this as we did upon almost every other part of his argument. One great mind in the Divinity Lectures of that period led us to see that Butler was not infallible, when Dr. O'Brien, then Archbishop King's Lecturer in Divinity, showed us a flaw in Butler's argument on "Miracles." Scripture, in its account of man, has since led us to detect a far greater error in the reasoning of Butler, and to see its source. The philosophical dogma, derived from Plato, led the profound mind of the Bishop of Durham to write his weak, inconsequential, and unscriptural chapter "Of a Future Life."

VII. The object of Butler's chapter is to show that "our *organised bodies are no more ourselves, or part of ourselves*, than any other matter around us." The person, the man, the being we each feel ourselves to be has only a temporary but by no means necessary connection with the organised body. This person is a "living substance," a "living agent," who dwells for a time in the body, but is not the body or of it. As here a limb may be lost and yet this "living agent" survive the loss, so may the entire organised body be lost, and yet the "living agent" be no more affected by the loss than it was by the loss of a limb, or, for that matter, by the shortening of the hair or the cutting of the nails. Death is only the "living agent" ceasing to be connected with the body, and going alive and uninjured, or more probably with greatly enlarged powers of every kind, to some other place than this earth. Death is not the loss of life, or the diminution of life, by the "living agent," but simply change of locality and residence. The man survives what is impertinently called his death: the "living agent" does not die: *death answers*, with Butler, *to our birth*, "which is not a suspension of the faculties we had before it, or a total change of the state of life in which we existed in the womb, but a continuation of both with such and such

great alterations." There is Butler's idea of Death. It is like a man's birth: it is no loss of life, but the continuation of life under vastly improved conditions. He exactly agrees with Wesley. What Wesley calls "immortal spirit" Butler calls "living substance," "living agent." This "spirit," or "living substance," is with both the person, the man. With both it is unaffected by death, or rather its living powers are vastly increased. And so with the recluse metaphysician of the cloisters of Durham, as with the peripatetic preacher of Methodism, the Scriptural doctrine that all men die is wholly set aside. French philosophy wrote over the entrance of Père la Chaise—"Death is an eternal sleep;" English orthodox theology would write over every graveyard, "there is no death at all." Graveyards are, with Butler and Wesley, but vast receptacles of worn-out clothes and ruined houses made of earth, which the wearer has ceased to use and the dweller to inhabit. *No man has died*, according to these great authorities; and Butler and Wesley represent the current thought of Christendom. The opinion of orthodoxy is as unscriptural as the opinion of infidelity.

VIII. Now for another popular contradiction of Scripture on the subject of death. We have seen that death is represented in Scripture as a penalty, a punishment, a curse, an enemy. This it is to all whom it affects. It is stated to be an "enemy" to the believer up to the very time when it is abolished by his resurrection.\* But the popular view of death, as consisting in the survival of the soul, *i.e.*, in the survival of the man, and his introduction, in the case of the righteous, to a life of a happier nature than any enjoyed here, wholly alters the character of death so far as the just are concerned. To say that death is to a good man a penalty, a punishment, a curse, an enemy, may be agreeable to the language of Scripture, but it is abhorrent to the language of orthodox theology. With the latter, death is one of the greatest, if not the very greatest, blessing which can possibly occur to a good man:

"'Tis our great pay day, 'tis our harvest rich  
And ripe."

"Death gives us more than was in Eden lost;  
The king of terrors is the prince of peace." †

IX. Young may be thought more a poet than a theologian, yet Young here only expresses what is generally thought of death; what must be thought of it in the case of the just if ordinary theology is correct, that the soul is the true man, and that it survives death in any of those elysian fields which pass under the names of heaven, Abraham's bosom, and paradise. But we, at any rate, cite a theologian and a master of thought when we cite the great reformer of Geneva. Calvin thus writes of death: "Certainly, whoever believes in Christ ought to be so minded that at the mention of death he

\* 1 Cor. xv. 26.

† Young's "Night Thoughts."

should raise up his head, *rejoicing at the news of his redemption.*"\* We need not waste words to show the contradiction of Scripture here. Our Lord tells us to regard the day of His coming as the period of our redemption; Calvin tells us to regard the day of our death as such. Paul tells us that believers groan, waiting for the "redemption of their bodies" at the day of resurrection; Calvin tells us that we need not wait for this day of resurrection, for that our redemption comes long before. The Bible tells us death is our enemy; Calvin tells us it is our best friend, the Prince of Peace.† And yet Calvin could not help contradicting Scripture. He had adopted as a first truth Plato's fiction that the soul was the man, and that man survived death. Nor can any one who holds this Platonic fiction avoid falling into a similar contradiction. This one philosophic error poisons our theology, as Satan knew it would when, with hellish craft, he first taught it in Eden.‡

X. We have seen from Scripture that the power of death endures, at least, from the time when a man actually dies to the time when he rises from the dead. This is the Scriptural account—plain, simple, and intelligible. But how does our Platonic theology treat this rational and scriptural view? It simply denies it. Death, with it, is the momentary act of dying: it is the act of the soul leaving the body: it is over the moment the soul has quitted the clay; it cannot be said with any truth to occupy so much as a moment of time. To this Death has come with our popular theologians. Its reign until resurrection is an old *Pauline error* corrected by those divines who drunk from an older and higher authority than Paul, the great philosopher of Athens, Plato. To this it must come according to their views. Their only idea of death must be that of a *passage*, painful it may be at times, but momentary, from life here to life elsewhere.

XI. "*That is not death,*" says Athanasius, "*that befalleth the righteous, but a translation*; for they are *translated* out of this world into everlasting rest; and as a man would go out of a prison, so do the saints go out of this troublesome life into those good things that are prepared for them."§ We do not *here* note the agreement of our orthodox Athanasius with Bishop Butler in denying the Scriptural doctrine that "death passes upon all men;" nor do we here note that Athanasius translates all believers to heaven; whereas Scripture seems to teach that two only, Enoch and Elijah, were translated: we here note that Athanasius regards the death of the righteous as a *momentary act of transition*. So the great Ambrose, of Milan, regards it: he tells us that death "*is a passage made from corruption to incorruption*, from mortality to immortality, from trouble to tranquillity."|| We do not here note that the great Ambrose, in here

\* "Calvin on Philippians," i. 23.

† Luke xxi. 28; Rom. viii. 23.

§ Athanasius, quoted Usher, Abp., "Answer," Ch. vi.

|| Ambrose quoted Usher's "Answer," ch. vi.

‡ Gen. iii. 4.



describing death as the passage from corruption to incorruption, *has affirmed of death what Paul affirmed of resurrection from death, i.e.,* has made a fool of the apostle: we only here note that he regards death as a *momentary passage*. It has no duration with him. The flash of lightning across the sky is the only thing that can, on his view, be compared with the time occupied by death. According to the teaching of these ancient fathers is that of their modern followers. The following is the learned Archbishop Usher's definition of death. Clear upon some points; learned on all on which he treats: he is utterly lost and bewildered in those labyrinthine wanderings through Limbo, and Hades, and Death, into which Romish schoolmen, and Christian fathers, and Grecian philosophers, led the honest mind of Usher. One error—the immortality of the soul and its identification in its supposed disembodied state with the man—led him into the hopeless, endless maze in which he struggles, and pants, and toils—now thinking he is on sure ground, now sinking deeply and hopelessly into the mire. However this be, here is his definition of death as, in point of fact, *occupying no space of time, i.e., as being, in fact, nothing but a bugbear.*

XII. "*That which properly we call death,*" he tells us, "*which is the parting asunder of the soul and body, standeth as a middle term betwixt the state of life and the state of death, being nothing else but the ending of one and the beginning of the other; and, as it were, a common mere between lands, or a communis terminus in a geometrical magnitude, dividing part from part, but being itself a part of neither, and yet belonging equally unto either, which gave occasion to the question moved by Taurus the philosopher, 'when a dying man might be said to die; when he was now dead, or while he was yet living?'*" Whereunto Gellius returneth an answer out of Plato, that *his dying was to be attributed neither to the time of his life nor of his death* (because repugnances would arise either of those ways), but to the time which was in the confine betwixt both, which Plato calleth *a moment or an instant, and denieth to be properly any part of time at all.\** He goes on, indeed, to say that death is sometimes taken for that state of death which lasts until the body is raised, but he tells us that this is an improper use of the word, and that *state of death* should rather be termed *the state of Hades.*

Such of our readers as have not read for themselves the works of the learned and pious Archbishop of Armagh, and have heard Samuel Johnson's description of him as the great luminary of the Irish Church, would find it very difficult, judging from the above quotation, to see how he was justly entitled to so flattering a description. But Usher is not to be judged from the above. He was here only following the *ignis fatuus* of Plato which led astray clearer intellects even than his. We may safely say that within the space of so many lines it would be difficult to find a greater amount of learned nonsense than

\* Usher's "Answer," ch. viii.



we have just quoted. Death, according to Usher, belongs as much to the state of life as it does to the state of death! That is rather perplexing. Again, he tells us, it is no part of either state! Again, he tells us that a man does not die either in the time of his life or of his death! Again he tells us that death occupies no time at all! And again he tells us that death is no part of the state of death! However, what we here have to note is that, according to Usher, *death, in its proper acceptance, occupies no time.* From hence we would conclude that Usher annihilates death. Lest any of our readers should suppose that we, in our prejudice, put a constrained interpretation upon Usher's language in order to make him appear unscriptural or ridiculous, we will quote the words of a writer who agreed with Usher and differs wholly from us, in a work which now commands a large circulation and credit in America: "We talk of the death of man," says Hiram Mattison, "because we see the earthy house dissolve, *but it is only an illusion.*"

"*There is no death; what seems such is transition.*"\* Thus modern theology, under the guidance of Plato, denies that there is truly any such thing as death, and teaches that what is most improperly called so is only *a transition, man changing one place for another.* The emigrant from Europe to America may, according to Mattison, Usher, Ambrose, Athanasius, and their whole school, be as truly said to die as he who leaves this world to enter upon another. But then, men should remember that it was God who gave to a certain condition the name of death, and that if there is illusion in the name, it is God whom they charge with deceit!

XIII. It is most strange that men, clear upon other questions, do not see the absurdity of the language which they use on this whole question of death. We could quote verse after verse of hymns in extensive use, and supposed by their admirers to breathe the very essence of the Gospel, which are in reality only tissues of absurdity. Let us take the following lines selected at random:—

"With my latest breath,  
Overcoming death.  
From the body disencumbered."

How can a man be said to overcome death in drawing the last breath of life? Surely when he has drawn the last breath of life it is then that death has overcome him! As long as any breath of life is in the man, death is kept at bay. Death may be near at hand—visibly seen to approach—but as long as breath remains death certainly has not conquered in the strife. And yet the hymn above quoted tells us that this is precisely the moment when man has conquered death! Death has overcome the man, and the man has overcome death by one and the same last drawing of breath! Can absurdity go farther? And yet unto this absurdity Plato's view of the immortality of the

\* Quoted in "The Doctrine of Immortality," by J. H. Whitmore. Buchanan.

soul draws millions of plain, sensible, pious Christians, who sing with heart and voice the most utter nonsense. It is well God accepts the will for the deed; but in the triumph of truth on this question of the intermediate state of man we foresee the expunging of many popular hymns from Christian hymnals.

XIV. From every quarter proceeds a medley of utterances upon this intermediate state of man, and upon the nature of death, which are all supposed to be very scriptural, but which are, in reality, opposed diametrically to its teaching. Heathen philosophy, Jewish tradition, Apocryphal forgeries, Christian fathers, middle-age schoolmen, Roman theologians, and Protestant divines, unite here in a most astonishing harmony which is yet the harmony of error. We will give a few passages for the edification of our readers. Here are descriptions of that death which God has described as a penalty, an enemy, and a curse!

XV. "When thou shalt leave the body," says the heathen Pythagoras, "and come unto a free heaven, thou shalt be an immortal God, incorruptible, and not subject to mortality any more." If this is true, is it not strange how a heathen taught so clearly what no prophet had ever uttered; for certainly we find no strains of this kind in Job, the Psalms, or Isaiah. The Apocryphal Book of Wisdom, speaking of the souls of the just, says, "In the sight of the unwise they *seemed to die*," and the Jew Philo says that Abraham "having left this mortality, was adjoined to God's people, enjoying immortality, and made equal to the angels." Strange that uninspired writings should go so far beyond the inspired writings of the Old Testament! "*Thy death*," says the Apocryphal Gospel of Joseph, speaking of the dissolution of our Lord's mother, "as also the death of this pious man, *is not death, but life enduring to eternity*." How much clearer this Apocryphal forger is on death than Paul! "*Death is abolished*," says Gregory Thaumaturgus, "in this performing a more wonderful work than any of his other wonders." "*What the multitude call death*," says the Platonic philosopher, Maximus Tyrius, "*is but the beginning of immortality*." "That is not death," saith the orthodox father, Athanasius, copying too faithfully the maxim of the Platonist, "that is not death that befalleth the righteous." "Death is the passage from corruption to incorruption," says Ambrose of Milan. "Death is the salvation of the Lord," says Calvin, "and anticipates the day of His coming." Tillotson quotes approvingly the old heathen saying—"The Gods conceal from men the sweetness of dying, to make them patient and contented to live." No other subject seemed to transport Young into the very heavens of rapturous poetry as this subject of death:

"Death is the crown of life  
Were death denied, poor man would live in vain;  
Were death denied, to live would not be life;  
Were death denied, even fools would wish to die.

Death wounds to cure: we fall, we rise, we reign!  
 Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies,  
 Where blooming Eden withers in our sight.  
 Death gives us more than was in Eden lost:  
 The King of terrors is the Prince of Peace."

The poet of Methodism also sings of death,—

"Mortals cry, a man is dead!  
 Angels sing, a child is born."

At the time of death says Luther, we have the mansions in heaven and Christ with us for all eternity. "To die," says Isaak Taylor in his *Saturday Evening*, "is to burst upon the blaze of uncreated light, and to be sensitive to its beams—and to nothing else." It is no wonder that our most recent writers upon this subject, encouraged by an unbroken catena of authorities through Christian and Jewish Rabbis to the great Rabbi Plato, should boldly teach Plato's doctrine. "*There is no death*," says Hiram Mattison, "*what seems such is transition*."\*

XVI. *Such is the glorification and deification of death!* In the teaching of men who call themselves orthodox and Scriptural death is magnified and lauded to the skies. No event can be more cheering: no event can be more glorious. More glorious things cannot be spoken of Life Eternal than these men speak of death! The coming of our Lord is not more to us than the coming of death! Speak of death as an enemy! Speak of death as a penalty! Speak of death as a curse! 'Tis foul slander, shouts out the host of the orthodox, following in the wake of Plato. Death is the best of friends: the truest of comforters: the presence most to be desired! So loud is the chorus of voices praising death: so unanimous the crowd of grave, learned, pious men, who speak lovingly, cheerfully, trustfully of death, that we almost think that we must be wrong, and that we have been saying things of death that we ought not to have uttered. But when we look a little more closely into the *conduct* of these men we begin to doubt the sincerity of their words, or at all events their truth. They seem to dread this friend: to shudder at the approach of this Prince of Peace. Nature seems then to us to struggle within them against their creed, and to be too strong for it. It begins to appear to us to be with them an intellectual proposition which they learned at school, not a heart belief. We go back to our Bibles to see whether the irrepressible nature of these men or their intellectual creed speaks truth, and we find that the former does. To one capable of the vast grasping thought of immortality death is indeed a thing of terror, for what is death according to the Word of God? It is even this: "that which befalleth the sons

\* Usher's "Answer," chaps. viii., vi.; "Wisdom," iii. 2; "Apocryphal Gospels," Ante-Nicene Library, p. 71; Gregory Thaumaturgus, "Discourse on all the Saints," ditto; "Immortality of the Soul," by R. W. Landis, p. 91; "Calvin on 2 Cor. v. 8;" Abp. Tillotson's "Sermons," p. 277; Young's "Night Thoughts;" "Dies Iræ," R. G. Girdlestone, 273.

of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast."\* So away depart all the grand things spoken by man of death. We see them to be vain illusions: fond conceits summoned up in heathen times to sustain mortified man at the sight of his mortality. Death is, after all, the king of terrors. Death is, for the time, the annihilation of man, his hopes, his thoughts, his life, himself—an annihilation without hope were it not for that Saviour, the true Prince of Peace because the Prince of life, who conquered death in His own person, and will abolish it in that of all His people. But this last is yet a future thing. The time is yet to come of which Isaiah speaks—"He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it."† Until the Lord performs this, we must regard death as the enemy who will be, but has not yet been, overcome.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE TIME OF JUDGMENT.

I. WE now come to a very important point in our inquiry, viz., the period when judgment takes place. Our question is, whether there is any judgment of souls supposed to exist as conscious and responsible persons separate from the body, or whether judgment does not take place until resurrection.

II. If our previous reasoning from Scripture has been just this question has been already decided. If man be truly but one person, and not converted by death into two individuals, there can be no judgment of man until the resurrection. For, according to the unvarying testimony of Scripture, the various men who have died are now buried and in their graves. But if these persons are also judged during this state of death, this can only be done on the supposition that death has made two persons out of one: that the dead body is one of them, and the separate soul another; and so that it is true of any man, say of Cain, that Cain is both dead and living, that one Cain is in the grave, and another Cain somewhere else; that one Cain is in the grave incapable of judgment, and that another Cain has been summoned before a judgment seat. We make free to say that such a theory has as little foundation in Scripture as it is contrary to our reason and convictions.

\* Eccl. iii. 19.

† Isa. xxv. 7, 8.



III. Again, if our reasonings from Scripture, as to the nature of the soul and the source of life, have been just, judgment is impossible until the resurrection, for there is no one to judge until then. We have seen that the spirit of man is, in truth, no other than the Divine breath of life, whose incoming into man before death imparts to him His soul or life, and whose departure from him back to its source in the eternal nature takes away his soul or life, so that this soul or life is no more than it was before the breath of life entered into him. The idea of a separate living soul is, on this scriptural view, therefore untenable, and, consequently, there can be no judgment on such separate souls since, in reality, they do not exist.

IV. But besides these Scriptural arguments which are to our mind quite conclusive upon the subject, Scripture expressly tells us that judgment is not passed upon any man, good or bad, during the state of death, but is reserved, as all our sense and reason would point out, until the resurrection. It was very natural for men like Plato, who believed that the body was not any part of man, but was an accident which became connected with man by way of punishment, or for some reason—who believed that man had a perfect life before he joined the body, and would have a perfect life after he had left it for ever—who never dreamed of the grand Scriptural truth of a Resurrection—it was natural, we say, for such a man to suppose that judgment would take place when man quitted the body. *With Plato the soul had existed from eternity.* With Plato this eternal soul was the real man. It became connected in time with a body, but this body was never a part of the true man, but an accident from which death would disencumber him. Judgment upon the soul separate from the body was, therefore, a natural and a reasonable idea with Plato, for it was judgment upon the man in all his proper nature. But for us who read that "God formed man out of the dust of the earth," to suppose judgment passed upon anything else but this man thus made of earth seems perfectly absurd. Happily Scripture does not require us to believe it. All the great scenes with which Scripture connects man, it connects with *the man of Genesis*, not with the man of *Plato's Phædo*. The man of Genesis is a being essentially different from the man of Plato. It is with the man of Genesis that the Bible deals. His first pure life in Eden, his fall, his recovery, his judgment, his resurrection, his eternal life, his everlasting destruction, are all connected with the man of Genesis, the living soul, the body animated by the breath of life from the ever-living God,—and not with Plato's Soulman, or Virgil's unsubstantial shade. Error is ever striving to break this connection of the Divine dealings with *the man as made by God*. One error divides man for ever from the body by denying a bodily resurrection: another error divides man for a time from the body by teaching a judgment on and retribution to man in the intermediate state. Both errors are of one and the same kind. They who would deal with man bodiless for a time may surely suppose man bodiless

for ever. The supposition of judgment and retribution without the body in the intermediate state naturally leads to the denial of any resurrection, for surely if judgment and retribution can happen *to man* without any body, *of what* use is resurrection?

V. But Scripture expressly tells us that neither judgment nor retribution happen until the state of death is passed and resurrection has taken place. The former of these truths we will show in this chapter, and the latter of these in our next. Resurrection, the grandest act in God's dealings with man, is not the aimless, objectless, purposeless thing that our Platonic theology has made it. It gives life to man, to one man eternal life for his endless joy in praising God, to another man life for judgment and righteous retribution. Without resurrection, according to Scripture, the dealings of God with man would and must be cut short and ended. With our Platonic divines those dealings could go on with man for ever without any resurrection, for with them the separate soul is the true man, capable of and possessing life; capable of all the acts and purposes of life; a fit subject for judgment, a fit subject for retribution, a fit subject for joy and sorrow, not requiring the body either to constitute it man or to enable it to perform the act and part of man! *Plato's man* has taken in our theology the place of *God's man*. "Man is a soul," says Plato: "Man is dust animated by my breath of life," says God. Popular theology, in teaching the separate life of the soul and making this soul true and proper man, has adopted the teaching of Plato, and abandoned that of God. For it is evident that if this supposed separate living soul is not true and proper man it would be unjust to make it responsible for the acts of man. It would be like judging William for the conduct of John.

VI. But Scripture uniformly tells us that the judgment of man for his conduct here is to take place before Christ when He comes again the second time. Without entering upon the prophetic question as to whether all men are judged together, or whether this judgment may not be spread over a wide space of time, and comprise judgment of various classes of men subsequently the one to the other—questions which must be decided by a very careful induction of many places of Scripture—all that we would here maintain is that no man is, according to the teaching of Scripture, judged until after the Lord Jesus comes the second time in person. Of such importance was this truth held to be, and so undoubtedly the doctrine of Scripture, that it forms one of those articles of the Apostle's Creed deemed essential to baptism, and so to salvation, which have been accepted in the Catholic Church from the Apostle's days to ours—"From whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Here the Athanasian Creed has faithfully followed the earlier Creed of the Apostles: "At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give account for their own works."

VII. We should scarcely think it necessary to prove from Scripture

an article which every Christian man professes to hold. However we will refer to some passages of Scripture in proof. And, in the first place, our Lord tells us of large classes of men long since dead that they have not yet been judged, but await judgment at some future time: "Verily, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city." He elsewhere repeats the same sentiment of the men of Tyre and Sidon.\* He thus affirms of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrhah, of Tyre and Sidon, that they have not yet been judged, but will be judged at some future time, which He calls the day of judgment. We suppose that what Christ said of these men may with equal truth be affirmed of at least all the heathen who had died before His time. But what He affirmed of these heathen He also affirmed of *the Jews living in His own day*. Both are to be tried in this coming judgment day. And what He says of the Jewish cities of His own time, we suppose to be equally true of the Jews of all previous time. And thus we have Christ teaching that neither the various generations of His own nation up to the time of His first coming, nor the various generations of the heathen nations, had been judged, but that they all awaited judgment at some future day. We are thus told that for four thousand years there *was no such thing as judging men when they were dead*. We should suppose that we might affirm the same of the generations of men, Jewish, Christian, and heathen, who have died since, *i.e.*, that separate souls are not judged.

VIII. This is the very thing which our Lord does teach. He affirms that *all the sins of mankind of all future time* should be accounted for in that "day of judgment," wherein Sodom and Gomorrhah, Tyre and Sidon, Bethsaida and Capernaum, should give account of themselves: "I say unto you, that every idle word that men *shall speak*, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." And His apostles Peter and John affirm the same truth.† So here we are taught that all mankind, Christian and heathen, will be judged as the generations before Christ, *i.e.*, that their judgment does not take place during their state of death, but at some period subsequent to it.

IX. We suppose that no one will dispute that this judgment of the great day, when fallen angels share with man in judgment, is that day of which Paul speaks when he says, "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ."‡ Here Paul assembles the whole universe—men of every time, and land, and creed, and life—before the judgment-seat of Christ, at some future time. What that time is our Lord tells us Himself. It is when He returns from that right hand of God where He now is. He tells us this in His parable of the talents.§ It is "after a long time that the Lord of those servants

\* Matt. x. 15; xi. 22; Mark vi. 11.

† Matt. xii. 36; 2 Peter ii. 9; 1 John iv. 17.

‡ Jude 6; Rom. xiv. 10.

§ Matt. xxv. 19.



cometh, and reckoneth with them." *There is no reckoning with good or with wicked servants until the Lord comes.*

X. As usual, our Platonic theology has virtually nullified this great truth of Scripture, as it has done to every other truth to which it is opposed. It has done so stealthily and craftily, but most surely. It has not denied in words the great day of future judgment of which Christ and His apostles speak, but it has robbed it of all its significance and meaning by telling us that there is *another judgment before it, which effects for every man separately what the final judgment has to do.* *There are two judgments*, say our Platonic divines: there is a special judgment for every man separately the moment he dies, and the general judgment for all united at the resurrection. As the soul is the man, and lives apart from the body on death, they must have soul judgments to suit its state. It is curious how this Platonic dogma has ranged under one banner men of the most opposite opinions. Protestant and Romanist are called forth by its stern behest from their opposite ranks to march as brethren in the ghost-land.

XI. "Consider," says the "Key of Paradise," instructing the Romish penitent in his "Meditations of Judgment," "Consider that, instantly after death, thy soul is to be presented before the bar of God's judgment, according to that of the Apostle 'after death comes judgment.' And again, 'all of us must appear before the tribunal of Christ, that every one may give an account of his deeds, good or evil.' Which particular judgment is no less to be feared than the general doom at the end of the world."\* The excellent Commentary of Poole, drawn out by Nonconformist divines in the 17th century, is here harmonious with the Roman view. It tells us that "after souls by death are separated from their bodies, they come to judgment, and thus every particular one is handed over by death to the bar of God the great Judge, and so is despatched by His sentence to its particular state and place with its respective people. At the great and general assize, the day of judgment, shall the general and universal one take place, when all sinners, in their entire persons, bodies and souls united, shall be adjudged to their final unalterable and eternal state."†

XII. Such are the heresies into which men are led by their adoption of a single philosophical dogma. This immortality of the soul has united Protestant and Romanist in one common error; has created two judgments where God only speaks of one; has virtually nullified God's day of judgment by the adoption of man's. For what is the second judgment if another has already taken place? Why should saint or sinner be called a second time to account for what he has already accounted? Man's day of judgment makes a fool's-day of God's. But for man's day of judgment there is no proof. We defy a single text of Scripture to be advanced in favour of it. While those passages which we have already referred to do most assuredly

\* Key of Paradise, "Meditations of Judgment;" "Catechismus ad Parochos, p. 1, a. 7, s. 3.

† Poole, Mat. "Com. on Heb. ix. 27."



contradict it, when they tell us that it is at the second coming of the Lord that He will take account of His servants. We denounce this figment of a judgment upon separate souls, introduced by heathens who taught that the soul survived the body, and who must, therefore, needs introduce shadowy courts of law for shadowy culprits.

XIII. We rejoice to find that the idle imaginations of heathen philosophers and poets are rejected from the healthy world of God's revelation. Christ is not a Minos or a Rhadamanthus, summoning naked souls before Him to judgment. The Hades of the Bible is not "An Infernal Region," such as Pluto presided over, whither shivering ghosts went to hear their doom. The scenes which Lucian held up to ridicule are not to be reproduced for the edification of reasonable Christians without drawing forth a protest that they are as baseless when taught by Christian theologians as when taught by heathen priests. The bar of Christ is a different scene. *A man* will sit upon that judgment seat, *judging men*. Men, as God created them, not as they are pictured by John Wesley and Bishop Butler, will stand before that bar. In the body they sinned or served God: in the body they will be judged by the Son of Man.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE TIME OF RETRIBUTION.

I. We are now led by the course of our inquiry to consider when retribution to man is given for his conduct in this present life. By this retribution we mean God's treatment, as well of the righteous as of the wicked, the believer's reward of grace, the sinner's wages earned and deserved by his sin.

II. As we remarked in the beginning of our last chapter, so we have to remark at the beginning of this, that if our view throughout this book of human nature, derived from our study of God's Word, has been correct, we cannot for a moment doubt but that retribution takes place at the resurrection, and not one moment before. If man be really but one person, it is absolutely impossible that retribution could take place before resurrection, since Scripture tells us that man is dead and buried in the grave. The idea of retribution in the intermediate state would involve the unscriptural absurdity that death creates two persons out of one—one of these persons dead in the grave and incapable of joy or sorrow, the other living, and therefore capable of both. And, again, if we have rightly understood from Scripture the nature of the soul, viz.—that it means that life of man of which the withdrawal of the spirit deprives him, it is impossible that retribution could be exercised in the case of that which has ceased to

exist. To these considerations our last chapter has added another proof in the same direction. Retribution before judgment is contrary to all the principles of the divine and human law. Scripture expressly tells us that judgment must precede retribution in the case of every individual of whatever character. "We must all," says the Apostle Paul, "appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."\*

III. This text of St. Paul is a most important one in this enquiry, and absolutely decisive that *no retribution whatsoever*, be it reward or punishment, takes place before the resurrection and the judgment. It is thus decisive whether we accept our present translation as perfectly correct or whether we alter it in agreement with very high authority. To the best of our judgment the text should be translated thus: "for we must all be *made known* before the judgment-seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." There can be no question but that "made known or made manifest" should be the translation of the Greek verb in this verse as it is its translation in the next. Bengel expresses its sense when he says that it means not merely that we should appear in the body, but that we should be made known together with all our secret deeds.† The text is plainly one in sense with those numerous texts of Scripture which speak of the great coming day of the Lord, when He shall raise the dead, and when all secret things shall be exposed and brought to light, when every man shall be made known in his true and proper light.‡ As this is, however, now generally allowed to be the proper translation, we need not dwell further on it.

IV. Now what is the teaching of this solemn text of Paul? It is plainly this, that retribution does not, and cannot, take place, until after the day of resurrection. The judgment seat of Christ is that judgment seat which is set up when He comes and raises up the dead. It is then that all secret things are made known, when every man is manifested. But not until then will retribution take place; not until then will the sinner be punished, and the saint receive his reward, *i.e.*, it is in the body, and not out of the body that retribution takes place.

V. This scriptural doctrine is just what our reason approves of. It was in the body man sinned, or man glorified his Maker. It seems that it should be in the body that he should receive his recompense. The idea of retribution out of the body is absurd. The idea of souls unconnected with the body receiving retribution is only worthy of that Platonic theology which tells us that the soul, and not the body, is the man. "Man," says Bengel, "acts well or ill with his body. Man, with his body, receives his reward."§ It

\* 2 Cor. v. 10.

† Bengel on 2 Cor. v. 10.

‡ Luke xii. 1—3; Rom. ii. 16.

§ Bengel on 2 Cor. v. 10.

would have been well for Tertullian's reputation if he had reasoned as truly and as scripturally on all other subjects as he has on "The Resurrection of the Flesh." His argument here we could, indeed, commend to our readers, if they would read what we consider the best treatise upon the resurrection that has ever been written.

VI. It is especially useful at the present day, when the prevalence of a Platonic theology hides from our view the importance of the resurrection, even if it does not actually deny the dogma altogether. In two places Tertullian comments upon this passage of the Apostle in words we would recommend to the best attention of our readers. In one place he says, "If the things which are to be borne *by the body* are meant, then undoubtedly a resurrection of the body is implied; and if the things which have been already done *in the body* are referred to, then the same conclusion follows; *for of course the retribution will have to be paid by the body, since it was by the body that the actions were performed.*" And in another place he says: "By mentioning both a judgment-seat and the distinction between works good and bad, Paul sets before us a Judge who is to award both sentences, and has thereby affirmed that all will have to be present at the tribunal in their bodies. *For it will be impossible to pass sentence except on the body, for what has been done in the body. God would be unjust, if anyone were not punished or else rewarded in that very condition wherein the merit was itself achieved.*"\* Had Tertullian always reasoned thus he would have stood foremost among the fathers of the early Church.

VII. But here Tertullian and Bengel, quoted above, bring out exactly the sense of St. Paul. "All must be made known," says the Apostle, "before the judgment-seat of Christ." Why must they be thus made known? *In order that they receive the fitting reward or punishment.* Then, according to St. Paul, *this making known must precede retribution?* The idea of retribution before resurrection was wholly alien to his teaching. The idea of retribution upon separate souls in Hades was an idea that Paul knew nothing of save to reject and to condemn it. It was with him but one of those Gentile or Jewish fables which he holds up to reprobation. To the masculine and Scriptural mind of Paul, the heathen fields of Elysium and their fires of Tartarus for their wandering ghosts was an absurdity, as it was in the mind of Lucian.

VIII. But Paul was here only following the teaching of His Master. Nowhere in the teaching of Christ are His disciples taught to expect their reward, or any part of it, *when they are dead.* The very idea of *dead men recompensed* is enough to excite scorn against the school of thought which has taught it until, from the perpetual repetition of the nonsense, we could not see its folly. But not to the state of death, but to the resurrection from that state of death, does our blessed Lord teach His people to look. "When thou makest a

\* Tertullian's "Resurrection of the Flesh," ch. xliii., against Marcion, Bk. V. ch. xii.

feast," He says, "call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: *for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*"\* Then, and not when his people slept the sleep of death, did the Lord of Life teach them to look for their reward. He never tells them to think their reward is come when they are dead, when their soul is in Hades and their body in the grave, but when they follow Him in His resurrection as they followed Him in His death, and when their soul is rescued from Hades and their body from the grave at the voice of love and power that speaks to sleeping ones in the day of His appearing.

IX. And what passage from Christ's lips, or those of His Apostles, is brought forward to overthrow the doctrine that on resurrection, and not before it, retribution is dealt out? We here speak of passages which directly speak of such a previous retribution, not of passages from which such a retribution may be inferred. To these latter we will give attention further on. But are there, according to our Platonic theologians, any passages of Scripture which do directly state that before resurrection retribution of any kind, reward or punishment, take place. Yes, they say, there is *one*. Where is it? In Luke xvi. 23. What do these words form part of? A parable! What are the words? "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." And here is the only passage in Scripture which directly states that before the resurrection punishment and reward are meted out. And of what force are these words to set aside the uniform testimony of Scripture? They form portion of the *story part of a parable*. How far this story part is true; how we are to interpret its various circumstances; whether we suppose events here presented, which are anticipated in time and place in order to suit the moral, the hidden, real truth: all these things are to be determined from other sources, and not from their position in the story. We have exactly the same right to suppose, from Isaiah's grand parable, that the old kings are seated upon thrones in Hades and make taunting or civil speeches to each other as the recently deceased monarchs come in and take a new throne there, as we have to suppose that the rich man suffered and spoke in Hades as he is represented in the parable of Christ. But as this parable of Dives and Lazarus shall receive further on a full consideration, we will not further dwell on it here. We only noticed it to affirm the principle that the mere story of a parable can never be allowed to set aside the plain teaching of Scripture, and that the only passage of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation which directly affirms that retribution precedes resurrection is this solitary parable. But it must take its interpretation from other Scriptures, not impose a meaning upon them. And

\* Luke xiv. 13, 14.



their plain and uniform teaching is that retribution follows resurrection, and never precedes it by a moment.

X. Again we have to express our deep sense of delight that God's revelation does not send us back as to our schoolmasters to heathen fables. Ghost-lands on the earth or under the earth have no place in the healthy teaching of Scripture. We have in heathendom bodiless souls rolling stones up steepes, and longing for draughts of water, and suffering agonies upon wheels. But these are old wife's fables. We have no mimicry of them in the Word of the Living God.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### THE SLEEP OF DEATH.

I. FROM all that we have hitherto considered we have drawn the conclusion that death is to man really and truly a *sleep*. That it is an *eternal* sleep as the Epicurean philosopher of old and many infidels now have taught we reject on the testimony of those repeated Scriptures which speak of resurrection for all men, and of eternal life for the people of God. But that it is a sleep such as Epicurus thought would be eternal, a sleep deep, unconscious, unbroken while it lasts, for man, is what we have concluded as the teaching of God's Word.

II. Now that *man sleeps* in death is the express testimony of Scripture. From first to last this is the testimony. This is the uniform language of the Old Testament; this language is continued uniformly in the New. Man is said, in death, to go to sleep. This is absolutely affirmed of man, without any explanation that it is only meant for a part of him, and not for all. We never read that man sleeps as to his body, while he is wakeful and conscious as to his soul. This is the language of Platonic theologians, for which the faintest resemblance is not to be found in Scripture. There we are told absolutely that *man sleeps*. We are bound, therefore, to believe that man does sleep. *Whatever man is, sleeps*, if we will believe God's Word. If people will say it is only the body that sleeps, then they must allow that the body, by itself, is man. If they say that man has both body and soul, and that these united constitute man, then they must allow that both body and soul sleep. For, that man sleeps in death is the express testimony of Scripture repeated too often to be contradicted or set aside.

III. Job, anticipating the period of his death, thus addresses God: "Why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? *For now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning and I shall not be.*"\* Here is what Job expected

\* Job vii. 21.

death would be to him: a sleep where was no life—the *sleep of death*: when there was in being no such man as Job! For a future life Job must indeed have looked to resurrection, for assuredly he did not believe there was any life for him in the deep sleep of death. Again, God speaks to Moses of His approaching death. In what words does He describe it? He does not tell him that He is going to take him up to heaven, or to give him a place in paradise, or to remove him from this life into another and a better. He simply describes his death as the time when he “*should sleep with his fathers.*”<sup>\*</sup> Moses when he died slept. That is God’s account. Let who will say, “Moses did not sleep.” God’s Word says he did, and that all his fathers before him did the same. Such was the faith of David’s time. Bath-sheba speaks to David of his approaching end, “*When my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers.*” And Daniel affirms of all men who have died that “they sleep in the dust of the earth.”<sup>†</sup> Such as is the testimony of these texts is the unvarying testimony of the Old Testament. The dead, according to it, are asleep. Man, however he is to be defined, is asleep in death. The Old Testament knows of no waking for man until the period of the resurrection.

IV. It is often said that the New Testament speaks a different language from the Old. It never speaks an *opposite* language. But here it repeats the language of the Old without the smallest deviation from it. On eternal life it is fuller and clearer than the Old Testament, because its grand theme is Christ Himself, who is eternal life, and whose resurrection is its pattern and its pledge. But of death, and of its state, the New Testament has nothing new to say, and it says nothing new. It repeats in language just as strong as the Old, *that death is a sleep for man*. It makes no nice distinctions such as our Platonic divines so constantly make. It never says that the soul is alive, and awake, while the body is asleep. From language such as exposes Christian theologians to the ridicule, open or concealed, of men who have studied the physiology of man, the New Testament is wholly free. It simply says that *man*—whatever man is—*sleeps in death*. The absurd contradictions of our Platonic divines, that man is in the grave and in heaven at the same time, that he is dead and alive, asleep and awake, the New Testament knows nothing of.

V. Our Lord speaks to His disciples of His friend’s death as “*our friend Lazarus sleepeth* ;” and of his resurrection as, “*I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.*” In Christ’s mind Lazarus was sleeping in the grave, not singing praises in heaven, or anywhere else. Such was Paul’s view of all the dead in Christ—“Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of *them that slept*,” or rather of them who have slept—“the firstfruits of *the sleeping.*” (So Vulgate.) He repeats this when addressing the Thessalonian Church—“We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent *them which are asleep.*”<sup>‡</sup> If one of our Platonic divines were

<sup>\*</sup> Deut. xxxi. 16.    <sup>†</sup> 1 Kings i. 21; Dan. xii. 2.    <sup>‡</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 20; 1 Thes. iv. 14.

asked in what condition a departed believer was, he would reply that he was in paradise praising God: if Paul were asked, he would reply that he was asleep. Paul's theology differed here from Plato's.

VI. The passage from Thessalonians to which we have just referred, bears so strongly upon our present subject, and is so decisive that Paul knew nothing whatever of that survival of man in his soul of which modern theology is so full, that we will dwell more fully upon it. The Christians of Thessalonica had lost some of their number through death. They were sad in consequence. Whence principally did their sorrow arise? One chief cause, or rather the great cause, was one personal to the survivors. This would appear from verse 13, where their sorrow is compared to that of the heathen. When these lost their friends, their grief was, that they never hoped to see them again. The "*desiderium mortuorum*" (Bengel), the longing for the presence of what has faded away from our sight, which everyone who has loved and lost feels so strongly, was the strong cause of the grief of the believers at Thessalonica. They knew that their dead slept in Christ, and, therefore, it was through no misapprehension of their real condition that their sorrow arose. It was *personal*: *it was for their own loss*. Paul does not find fault with them for their sorrow: he only warns them not to allow it to be excessive.

VII. In what would this excess consist? It would consist in allowing their sorrow to resemble the grief of the heathen for their dead. What was this heathen grief? It was the grief of persons who had no hope. No hope of what? No hope of ever seeing their dead again. Why had they no such hope? Because they believed in no future life beyond this where they and the departed might meet again. It was not merely that the heathen did not believe in a resurrection of the body, but that they did not believe in the life of the separate soul, because, to use Calvin's words, "they considered death to be final destruction, and thought that whatever was taken out of the world had perished."\* Such, according to Paul, was the *real belief* of the great majority of mankind, of that vast heathen world, which surrounded the little Churches of Christ. All their philosophers' arguments about the soul's immortality, all their poets' pictures about Elysian fields and happy shades, as well as shades in woe, *came to nothing when they looked at the face of death*. They had no faith in Plato and Cicero; they smiled sadly at Virgil's pictures when they saw death enter their dwellings and seize upon his prey. Plato might do very well for a school exercise, to sharpen the wit and to furnish fine periods for the future literates and orators of Rome and Athens and Alexandria, *but they did not believe in Plato*, as indeed it would be hard for them to do, when Plato only appealed to reasons in which he evidently had no great confidence himself. Virgil and his *Shades* might very well amuse the mind when it was free and careless, but not when sorrow had fallen upon it. The heathen mind

\* Calvin on 1 Thes. iv. 13.



did not believe in Charon and the ferry-boat, in Pluto and Proserpine, in Elysian fields, or in Tartarus. When they saw their dead lying before them, they mourned for them as persons who had no hope of ever seeing them again, because their real persuasion was that they had passed away into that blank non-existence from whence they had so mysteriously come.

VIII. Paul tells the Thessalonians that *as Christians* they ought not to have *such a sorrow*. Why? Because they mourned as persons *who had hope*. What hope? *The hope of Reunion*. This is the consolation that Paul here gives, and the only consolation that would suit the sorrow that was felt. Those whom you mourn for, he tells his readers, you shall see again, and meet in a union which shall never meet with end or interruption. *Reunion* is the Apostle's watch-word. Reunion to an intercourse as real, as personal, as conscious, *as had here been felt in life*. *This was the believer's consolation administered by the Apostle*.

IX. Now, *when* was this *consoling hope to be realised*? In this life they were to have the hope. When were they to have the fulfilment? The popular view of death places the fulfilment of this hope *in the intermediate state*. It tells us that each soul on death enters with all its powers increased into Paradise, there rejoins all who have departed in the faith, that each saint on death is reunited to all who have gone before him, and that all consciously enjoy mutual fellowship and intercourse in an even increased degree above anything which they had enjoyed here on earth in their lifetime. It will be remarked, however, that Paul does not allude to this in the remotest way. He does not, as Calvin would have done, tell them to expect *such reunion* upon death. Now there was here *occasion* for such a reminder *if it could have been given*. The Heathen opinion not only was that there would be *no resurrection*, but that also souls had on death *ceased to exist, and, therefore, could have no personal intercourse* with each other. The Heathen opinion was that the isolation and separation *began from the moment of dissolution*. *It was against Heathen grief* that Paul was consoling the Thessalonians. He would, therefore, if he had believed as is now popularly believed in the Church, have pointed out to them that the sorrow which the Heathen felt for their dead would be removed, not merely at the resurrection, but at the moment of each believer's death. But he does nothing of the kind. He does not give us a hint of it. He ignores it altogether.

X. He does more. *He virtually denies it*. He is comforting believers by the prospect of *reunion*! When does he tell them to *expect it*? *At the resurrection*! At the resurrection, he tells them, your sorrow will be removed, you will rejoin the departed, you will enjoy their society once more. Here, we maintain, Paul virtually tells us that he did not know of, hold, or maintain *any such idea* of the intermediate state as Christians now generally hold. If those he wrote to mourned for separation, if Paul comforted them by the pros-



pect of reunion, if he pointed to the resurrection as the consoling prospect when their longed-for reunion would be accomplished, then by every fair inference he did not believe or teach that there would be *any reunion before the resurrection*. All might, as they would no doubt, be united in death, but the union would not be of that kind which alone could console the Thessalonians, the union of living with living, it would be but adding one more sleeper to the unnumbered sleepers of the past. The reunion which could give any consolation would be at resurrection.

XI. Perhaps the best way to give a just idea of what the New Testament teaches on this question of the sleep of death is to point to one of the fullest descriptions which it gives of the death of an individual believer. Luke thus describes the death of the martyr Stephen: "They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit*. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, *he fell asleep*."\* Every part of this narrative is well worthy of our consideration. It furnishes a key, if we will only use it, to the whole question before us. The soul and spirit of man are too often confounded as if they were different names of one and the same thing. Scripture most jealously distinguishes them. The spirit of man, with it, is that breath of life which came forth from God Himself, which belongs to man in this life, and is the pledged possession of the believer for ever in the life eternal. It is this spirit, not his soul, which Stephen commits into the care of Jesus *to keep for him*. The spirit of Stephen is carefully distinguished from Stephen himself. Man's hope of life consists in the spirit being kept for him. Assured of this, *i.e.*, assured of his resurrection to life, *Stephen himself falls asleep*. The spirit was not Stephen: the spirit was not the man. Poor man might identify himself with this spirit, but Scripture tells him he is not spirit, but that he is dust. And so, when the spirit of Stephen had gone back to its source, and there was kept reserved to return to him on the day of resurrection, the man himself, Stephen, falls asleep. He could not help it. The source of life was gone. He must sleep, body and soul, an unbroken sleep, until that spirit of life come back again.

XII. Now it so happens that in that Word which was meant to give us full and clear ideas of the state of death, and which, as we have seen, describes that whole state as a state of unbroken slumber for man, we have not only these general descriptions of the state, but we have accounts of several persons who were in that state and came back from it, and lived many years afterwards among their fellow-men. Such were, in the Old Testament, the widow of Zarephath's son raised to life by Elijah, the Shunammite's child raised by Elisha living, and the dead man raised by contact with Elisha's bones in the sepulchre: such were, in the New, the widow's son, and Jairus

\* Acts vii. 60.

daughter, and Lazarus, raised to life by Christ.\* Now all these were cases of persons whose souls were in Hades for a longer or a shorter period of time. All these were persons competent to tell about Hades, if there was anything to tell.

XIII. According to Platonic theology, all of them had passed living into a vast world of living men. Their bodies, indeed, had ceased to have life, but they themselves, living souls, in full possession of living powers, able to speak and to act, able to enjoy and to suffer, and actually suffering or enjoying more than on earth they had ever suffered or enjoyed, had gone somewhere where they met unnumbered myriads of others like themselves. Whether such a visit to this great ghost-land were the visit of a moment, an hour, or of days, it would have impressed its wondrous lesson upon the imagination and the memory as with a pen of iron upon rock. For, according to our Platonic divines, these men and children had seen in their brief visit to the land of souls sights such as no man had ever witnessed upon earth. The gorgeous scenes of Nineveh, Babylon, and Rome, the festivals of Jerusalem, the battle-fields of Alexander, the triumphal entry of Roman consuls, would not so fill the imagination, or write themselves upon the memory, as would those scenes on which the soul of the widow's son was gazing as Elijah was praying that it might come back again, or on which Lazarus was lost in astonishment as his sorrowing sisters were sadly urging Christ with the words,—“Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.” These were persons who saw and conversed with the dead of all past times, the living souls, more countless than the sands of the sea, engaged in the occupations of this land invisible to living men. When they came back from this land of life they would have much to tell.

XIV. That Shunammite, whose greatness was in her eyes as nothing *because she had no child*, whose heart and soul were bound up with her child when God granted her the longing of her whole married life, whose hopes and anticipations were withered like grass when he died upon her knee, would she not ply him with her thousand questions when she took up her son once more alive, and went out to enjoy, with no witness near her, the sight of her child again? That friend of Christ, who was in Hades for four entire days, who was the centre of astonishment and curiosity to the crowds of a great metropolis, who, on the views of our Christian Platonists, had seen Adam, and Methusaleh, and Noah, and Joshua, and Samuel, and David, and Isaiah, and had walked and talked with them in the new scenes of soul-land,—How would he be plied with crowding question upon question by the various Jewish sects who held such various opinions of this mid-passage between this world's and resurrection life, by his many friends and acquaintances, by those fond sisters to whom life was a blank when Lazarus did not share it with them?

\* 1 Kings xvii. 2 Kings iv.; xlii. 21 Mark v. 41; Luke vii. 14 John xi.

The history of one world to tell to the inhabitants of another world hanging upon their lips! Never such narrators, never such an audience, if only our Platonic Christianity were true.

"They do not die  
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,  
Nor change to us, although they change;  
Rapt from the fickle and the frail  
With gathered power, yet the same,  
Pierces the keen seraphic flame  
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

XV. So writes Tennyson, giving us the Platonic view of the blessed dead. The poet turns from his own friend to the friend of Christ, who had, in Platonic judgment, so far surpassed in death all he had had in life, and expresses, through the mouth of Mary, that irrepressible longing to inquire of the returned from the land of living souls as to its condition.

"Where wert thou, brother, *those four days*?  
There lives no record of reply."

XVI. The poet is forced to give this as the answer to Mary's question. He has searched those beautiful chapters of St. John which speak of Lazarus: those other records of the Old and New Testaments which speak of others who were in the same condition in all respects as Lazarus. But still there is the same utter silence in God's Word. Not a syllable on record. The spell of unbroken silence reigns over the inspired writings. There must be a reason, and Tennyson gives us our choice of two:—

"He told it not; or something seal'd  
The lips of that Evangelist."\*

XVII. But we have a better reason in God's Word for this silence of Scripture than Tennyson has given. There is no record of reply, because there was no reply to be made. When Lazarus left his charnel-house, he had no tales to tell of Elysian fields within this earth, of heavenly orbs above it, and of their inhabitants, and so there is no record of what was not and could not be spoken. "The dead know not anything; all their thoughts perish," sentences such as these, which could be quoted in hundreds from the Bible, account for the Evangelist, because they account for a needs-must silence on the part of Lazarus. Where no word was spoken, no record could be made. Had Lazarus but spoken one word, given a general impression of the fancied soul-land, or detailed some particulars of its condition, the silence of St. John would not silence the thousand rumours and tales that would originate from a single utterance of a man who had seen and spoken of the mysterious land which was in everyone's thoughts, to which everyone was travelling, of which everyone would wish to catch a glimpse ere he was ushered into it to dwell as one of its inhabitants until the day of the coming of the Lord. But not one word in inspired or uninspired writings; not one

\* Tennyson: *In Memoriam*, xxx., xxxii.



faint tradition in Father or heretic, in genuine writings or forgery of the early centuries, that one single word fell from the lips of Lazarus, or that one solitary tale was told by him of the invisible land. Apocryphal gospels spake of the fancied circumstances of this imaginary land; but even they, in their shameless impudence, never ventured to connect their lying wonders with the name of the friend of Christ. For one who had been truly dead and truly returned from the state of the dead, whatever that state was, the "Gospel of Nicodemus" substitutes two supposed sons of the aged Simeon, who had taken up Christ in his arms, supposes them to have been raised from the dead and to have returned from the land of living souls, and into their mouths puts the lying tales of Hades and its supposititious dwellers, which it imposed upon credulity and ignorance.\* But even Apocryphal Gospels never dared to connect their stories with Lazarus. He had spoken no word of what he knew nothing of; he had brought back no tales of the living from the land of death; he could but report that those "four days" were to him an utter blank, no memory of circumstance or event. He knew not how long he had been in the grave. The four days might have been four thousand years, and they would have been to him the same blank, unidealess, uneventful period, which had left no memory of time, or place, or thought, because it was a period of the most utter and unbroken sleep unvisited even by a dream. The general accounts of Scripture of Hades as a place of oblivion and of sleep, exactly tally with the circumstances of those who had been dead, and who were raised from the dead.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### LIFE OR DEATH?

I. WE propose to consider in our present chapter the light in which Scripture generally regards the opposite states of life and death. The life, we speak of is man's life here terminated by his death. The death we speak of is his entire condition from the time he dies until the time he is raised again from the dead. We want to ascertain what comparison Scripture draws between these two states; which of them it considers the preferable one.

II. This is the simplest question in the world, and the most easily answered, according to the Platonic theory of death. We have only to ascertain *the character* of the person who dies, in order to be able to give a clear and decisive answer. There is no difficulty in making it. The reply comes at once and readily to our lips. That reply is, that if the person who dies dies in the faith of Christ, the state to

\* *The Apocryphal Gospels*. Ante-Nicene Library. T. T. Clarke. P. 199.



which death introduces him is a far happier state than the very happiest state here, and therefore that in the case of every such man death is preferable to life; while if the person who dies dies unreconciled to God, the state to which death introduces him is a far more miserable state than the worst he can suffer here, and that, consequently, to every such man life here, under any circumstances, is preferable to the state of death.

III. For the ordinary theory is that when a good man dies, his body goes to the grave, while he himself goes at once to a place of joy. Platonic divines may here differ as to where this place is, and what is its name; but of the character of the place there is no difference. They may suppose it to lie within the crust of this earth, or to be beyond the stars. They may call it Hades, or Paradise, or Abraham's bosom, or Heaven, according to their judgment, and attach peculiar ideas to these several places, confounding or distinguishing them as they think fit. But—no matter where the place be, or what its name—the good man goes to a condition of happiness surpassing anything he has here enjoyed. Again, the ordinary theory as to a wicked man is the opposite to this. The wicked man's body is buried, but the wicked man himself goes to a place of misery. Platonic divines may differ as to where this place is, and what it should be called. They may call it Hades, Tartarus, or Hell, confounding or distinguishing these places according to their several ideas, but they all agree that the condition to which the wicked man goes on death is a condition of misery. The state of the rich man in the parable of Lazarus expresses their opinion—"He lifts up his eyes, being in torments." The answer of the Platonic theory to our question is in every case ready and a simple one. Death is in every case the greatest blessing to a good man. Death is in every case the greatest curse to a wicked man.

IV. On our theory, we confess, the answer is by no means so simple and ready to hand. Our theory is that death is for all men alike the same, viz., an unconscious sleep. Being such it cannot, *in itself*, be desirable to any one, for it is, while it lasts, equal to annihilation. In comparing together life and death we must take into account a great many circumstances which are to guide us in our comparison. We are, in the first place, to compare together life and death *as they are in themselves*, without any reference to that resurrection and judgment which await every sleeper: in the second place, we are to take into account that this resurrection and judgment do await every man: that life is, according to our theory, that condition in which alone choice can be made of the resurrection to everlasting life or shame: that death merely sets its seal upon the choice that each man has made in life: that it frees the believer from any possibility of falling, and shuts out the wicked man from any possibility of salvation. And, according to these very various considerations, *we* must make our answer.

V. Our answer, then, is *complicated*. If life here were in every case one of happiness, or even of tolerable ease, we should say that life here would be, *in the case of every one*, preferable to death. But life here is not in every case one of happiness, or even of tolerable ease. It is often associated with such weariness and suffering, whether of body or of mind, that men would positively prefer not to exist than to exist in such circumstances. In all such cases, and supposing that the circumstances here supposed were to continue for life, we should say, death is preferable to life. While those painful circumstances lasted we should say, death is preferable to life. And thus in our comparison of life and death, *in themselves*, we do not take into account the character of men in God's sight, but we take into account the proportion of happiness and misery they are conscious of; we take into account only whether they would themselves prefer the life they have to not having life at all. On this supposition we should say that, under certain circumstances of ease, &c., it is better for a good man to live than to die; and, under certain other circumstances of misery, &c., it is better for a good man to die than to be alive. And the very same we say of a wicked man. If he enjoy his life, we say life is better for him than death: and if he be weary of life, we say it is better for him to be dead than to be alive.

But when we come to the second reflection we are able to give a decided and simple answer. We then say it is good or evil to die exactly in respect of each man's character in the sight of God. If a man has here chosen God in Christ for his portion, then it is good for that man to die, because he is then free from any further danger of making shipwreck of his faith. Resurrection will find him in the precise position he was in when he fell asleep in Jesus. But if a man has here refused God's offers of mercy, and chosen sin for his portion, then death is an evil to that man, because death excludes him from the possibility of repentance. Resurrection will find him in that precise state of alienation from God in which he breathed his last breath.

VI. We thus see that our theory does not enable us to give at all the ready answer to the question which the divine of Plato's school of theology can give. We must first separate the conditions of life and death in themselves from ulterior results ere we can make any reply at all. Comparing the two conditions, we must take into account the circumstances of each man apart from his religious condition in order to give an answer. The Platonist need do nothing of this. With him it is always better for a good man to be dead than alive; always better for a wicked man to be alive than dead. What we want to know is, with which of these views, our view or that of the Platonist, Scripture best agrees.

VII. *In the abstract, Scripture always prefers life to death.* This exactly suits our view, while it contradicts that of the Platonising divines. Life is God's gift to man; therefore, *in itself*, of necessity,

a blessing. Life, as given by God, is accompanied by what is requisite for its enjoyment. But death is, with us, the taking away of life, *i.e.*, the removal of a blessing. Consequently, in the abstract, our view that life is preferable to death is agreeable to Scripture. But the Platonist tells us that death is, in the case of every good man, his introduction to a higher and happier life than any he had here at the best; and therefore he by no means agrees with the abstract proposition of Scripture, that life is preferable to death. That such is the proposition of Scripture every one who has any knowledge of it must know. We need only refer below to some texts which affirm it.\*

VIII. We now come to circumstances and cases. So far, then, from Scripture supposing that death is, in the case of every good man, preferable to life, it lays down the exact converse, that, as a general rule, life is for him a preferable state to death. Length of days here is, in both Old and New Testament, regarded as a thing to be desired by good men, and promised to them as a blessing from God. "He that will love life, and see good days," says the Apostle Peter, "let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:" while Paul exhorts Christian children to obey their parents in the Lord, that it may be well with them, and they may live long in the land.† What Scripture thus says in general terms we also learn from it in special cases. David, speaking by inspiration, tells us that it was far more desirable for him to be alive than to be dead. "Return, O Lord," he says, "deliver my soul: oh, save me for Thy mercies' sake. For in death no man remembereth Thee: in Hades who shall give Thee thanks?"‡ David had not the smallest idea that it would be in itself better for him to be dead than to be alive: on the contrary, he says that life was for him a far more preferable condition. In the very same way his godly successor, Hezekiah, compared together life and death. On the approach of the latter he very earnestly deprecates its triumph. Life had its joys for the pious king, and he would not change them for what death could bring. He regarded death as taking them away, while it brought nothing else to replace them. Therefore, life was in his eyes far more to be desired than death. What is more, God allowed that he was in the right. As an answer to his prayer, and as a blessing to a pious man, God added to his days fifteen years.§ Those fifteen years were, if happy as those which preceded them, to be preferred to fifteen years, *aye*, to fifteen thousand years, in the state of death. They were so much time of happy life rescinded from the reign of nonentity. But, perhaps, some will say, "Oh, these are Old Testament Scriptures, and Old Testament saints; let us have the New Testament and its holy men." *As if what death was was unknown for four thousand years!* As if God had been speaking of death from man's creation, and

\* Deut. xxx. 15.

† 1 Pet. iii. 10; Eph. vi. 1—3.

‡ Psalm vi. 4, 5.

§ Is. xxxviii. 3—5.



neither David, nor Hezekiah, nor Isaiah, knew what it was ! But we will come to the New Testament and its holy men. We will come to Paul and Epaphroditus. Both knew—the former at least—what death was to bring to the child of God. Epaphroditus is sick, nigh unto death. He recovers. And what is Paul's comment on this recovery ? Just the very same kind of comment which Hezekiah is blamed for making by our Platonic divines ! “ *God had mercy upon him.* ” \*

IX. So Paul agrees with Isaiah, and Hezekiah, and David ! No wonder this when he tells us that he learned his theology from the Old Testament, and taught no one dogma that was not written in the law and in the prophets. In Paul's eyes, for such a man as Epaphroditus life was a better condition for him to be in than death. Epaphroditus was not come to its dregs—steeped in its miseries ; for him it was better to live than to die, in the judgment of St. Paul ! Then Paul was not here at one with Calvin, who tells the child of God to lift up his head at the bare mention of the name of death, as the bearer of redemption. Paul would reckon it no blessing to be detained from redemption, and therefore death was not in the eyes of Paul the bearer of joys more than life has to give. Life, in the circumstances of Epaphroditus, was with Paul a far more preferable condition than that of death. Paul, where was your philosophy ? Certainly not in the page of Plato, but in the old page of the Old Book which taught that death was in itself a curse.

X. So life, even for a good man, is, in the testimony of Old Testament and of New, vastly preferable to the state of death ! What, then, becomes of the theory that this state of death is for every good man vastly preferable to life ? It is seen to be an illusion, a mirage summoned up from the Platonic waste of sand, an effort upon man's part to reverse and make nugatory a great decree of God. But is not death sometimes represented by good men as preferable to life ? No doubt it is. But when ? In circumstances that make life no longer a blessing ! Under the very same circumstances that make wicked men prefer death to life ! *Under no other.*

XI. When did Job regard death as a blessing ? It was not when health and wealth, children and honour, were his, but when he was deprived of them all, and continuance in life was continuance in misery. It was *then* that death was to be preferred to life. It was then he said, “ Wherefore is light given unto him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul ; which long for death, but it cometh not ; and dig for it more than for hid treasures : which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave.” † It was when he sought rest in his bed and found no ease from painful watching, when even in his broken sleep he was scared with dreams and terrified with visions, that “ his soul chose strangling and death rather than life.” ‡ As it was with Job so was it with Elijah the prophet. It was when

\* Phil. ii. 27.

† Job iii. 21.

‡ Job vii. 15.



he was forsaken and solitary, when lawless power sought his life, when weary with hasty flight, when he thought himself alone on earth of faithful men, it was then that "he requested for himself that he might die, and said, 'It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers.'"<sup>\*</sup> As with Elijah, so with Jonah. It is when he feels himself made a scorn and a reproach, as though he had been a false prophet; and when bodily weariness is added to keen mental anguish, that he faints, and wishes to die, and says, "it is better for me to die than to live."<sup>†</sup> These were all men of God, and yet all these judged that life, in ordinary circumstances, was better than death, and that it was only the pressure of misery that made death preferable to life. They did not regard it with Calvin as the day of redemption: they regarded it as the loss of existence, only to be sought and longed for when life was associated with pain. Then, but not otherwise, they wished to depart, and be at rest.

XII. As it was with holy men in the Old Testament so with believers in the New. Paul, like Jonah, Elijah, Job, wished "to depart."<sup>‡</sup> We take the meaning of this word to be "to die." But what more can be argued from this wish of Paul than is shown from the similar wishes of believers before him, viz.—that he thought death, the loss of existence, better than such a life as his? He was now in the decline of a life which, at its best, seems to have been one of much physical infirmity. He was at this time lying in a Roman prison. For Paul, persecuted and almost alone, it was a gain to die. To Paul, persecuted and alone, rose up the strong desire to depart and to be at rest, as it rose to Jonah under the sun of Nineveh, to Elijah under the desert juniper, to Job as he scraped his body among the ashes. His work, he hoped, was over, and it had been a weary work which his Master had laid upon him, a work only endurable for the grand prospect which lay before him, when it was itself but a memory of the past.<sup>§</sup> For him, and all like him, it was better to be dead than to be alive.

XIII. We have thus seen it to be the teaching of Scripture that in ordinary circumstances life is better than death for the believer, and that it is only in circumstances of great misery that death is in itself preferable for them to life. We will now see that the inference to be drawn from these considerations in the case of good men is also borne out by what Scripture tells us of the wicked.

XIV. According to ordinary teaching, a wicked man when he dies is plunged at once in Hades into greater misery than he had ever here endured. The usual teaching is, that the pains which he endures in Hades are of the same character which await him after judgment in Hell. On this supposition death is in itself, and its immediate and inseparable consequences, the most terrible idea to the ungodly, and life here, no matter under what distressing, painful circumstances,

\* 1 Kings xix. 4.    † Jonah iv. 2—8.    ‡ Phil. 1. 23.    § 1 Cor. iv. 9; xv. 19.

is infinitely to be preferred by him to death. But this is not the teaching of Scripture. The general descriptions of death in Scripture are precisely the same for all men, utterly irrespective of character. While both Old and New Testament ever point to resurrection and judgment as differing most materially, according to the character of the persons raised and judged, we defy anyone to point out anything like this in the Scriptural accounts of death. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master."\* Such are the general descriptions of Scripture, making no difference in the state of death between one man and another. In death one and the same event precisely happens to good and evil. It is only in the day when God makes up His jewels, in the day of Jesus Christ, that distinction is made "between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not."†

XV. But what the Scripture thus conveys by its general description of death, it also conveys when it comes to speak more particularly of the life and death of wicked men. According to our Platonic theology, death is in itself an unspeakable calamity in the case of every wicked man. In the judgment of Scripture, death is sometimes in itself a great blessing to wicked men! We turn to the prophet Jeremiah for God's testimony to this fact, so monstrous in the eyes of our Platonic divines.‡ The time has come for Israel's sins to bring down Divine judgments upon the land. The voice of mirth and the voice of gladness has ceased from its cities; the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride are unheard; the land is desolate because of its sins. It is a time of mourning and of sadness. And what does God say of death as compared to such a life? *That it is to be preferred!* "Death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family." What is thus conveyed to us in the writings of the prophet of Jerusalem's woe is also conveyed to us by him who saw, in the visions of the Apocalypse, the calamities coming on the earth when the trumpets of judgment should sound. "In those days," says St. John, "shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them."§

XVI. From these passages of Scripture we find that when great troubles fall in this life upon wicked men it would be a desirable thing for them to be dead. This can only be upon the supposition that Scripture supposes the state of death to be for the wicked a state of unconsciousness and sleep. In great trouble they wish to die, and God, in righteous judgment, does not permit them to die. What utter nonsense this would be if popular theology were correct! With

\* Job. iii. 17—19.

† Jer. viii. 1—3.

‡ Eccl. ii. 14; ix. 3; Mal. iii. 18.

§ Rev. ix. 6.

it, the torments of the intermediate state equal the torments of hell. It would be madness in any wicked man to wish to exchange the calamities of this life for the far more terrible calamities that await him, in the judgment of our popular teachers. It would be mercy in God, and not judgment, to detain him in the calamities of this life from those more terrible evils by far.

XVII. We conclude, then, that, according to the teaching of Scripture, death is precisely the same event *in itself* to all men, and that it is for all men a slumber unbroken by joy or sorrow, by hope or by fear. Such a state alone answers all the requirements of Scriptural statements. No other condition suits them all. What is to be preferred by a wicked man to an unhappy life ; what is to be avoided by a good man in the happier circumstances of existence ; can only be that state of sleep, where all are quiet, where there is no joy and no sorrow, where man has returned to his dust again.

XVIII. But we could not do justice to the great question of life or death if we were only to compare them *in themselves*. This life and the death which follows it are only the preludes of greater events in the history of man. As life is followed by death, so death is followed by resurrection and by judgment. All men are to rise again with their bodies, and to give account of their deeds. And, *in relation to this coming judgment*, life and death assume qualities which they possess not in themselves.

XIX. This life is the period during which eternal life may be secured, and made our own. Scripture knows nothing of Gospels preached in Hades to bodiless souls by bodiless souls or angels. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." It never permits us to hope that aught good or evil can be done in the land where all things are forgotten. As man dies, he continues through the whole state of death, and rises up to judgment. If here we have chosen Christ, we cannot fall away from Him in Hades : if here we have rejected Him, we cannot choose Him in Hades. The period of unbroken sleep does not permit change of any kind.

XX. Now all this invests the close of this life with a momentous importance. It makes death a blessing or a judgment, exactly in agreement with the character of each individual that dies. It seals the choice of the believer to the eternal life, and that of the unbeliever to the everlasting destruction that follow upon resurrection and judgment. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness ; but the righteous hath hope in his death." Death to the former is a solemn judgment, calling him away from further hope of salvation : death to the latter is a blessing, calling him from further trial or danger of falling. In reference to their eternal future, death is thus a judgment or a blessing in exact correspondence with man's relation to God.

XXI. In regard of the wicked man he need not enter into further consideration. We will, however, say a few words more on the indirect benefits which death, as thus regarded, brings to the child of God.



We have, probably, in Paul's reflections upon his own approaching death the best and fullest account anywhere given of all the benefits which death can possibly bring to the most exalted believer. They are negative, not positive.\*

XXII. Paul, at Rome, looks forward to his being soon brought before the judgment-seat of Cæsar, where he knew he would be condemned to death. He has now the certain prospect of a death near at hand. He contemplates it exactly as the criminal when he has been condemned to die. He describes his feelings at the prospect. No doubt they are full of faith, full of hope. We more than doubt whether Paul would have looked at an approaching acquittal at Cæsar's judgment-seat with the smallest feeling of satisfaction, or that, if the stretching forth of his hand to plead for life would have added to his life, he would have raised it from his side. We are satisfied that he would not, of his own free will, have put off for a day or an hour the fate that was rapidly drawing near. Now, such are the circumstances, and Paul the man, to give rise and utterance to whatever feelings of hope and joy *God* allows to the nearest and dearest of his people at the prospect of death. It will be remarked, however, that Paul uses no such expressions as Calvin tells us the well-taught believer would use at the prospect of death. He does not call it the period of his redemption, but, on the contrary, intimates that *it was not*. Our popular hymns comparing the act of dying to the passage of the Jordan go altogether beyond the ideas of the great Apostle. The benefits he expects from it are none of them *positive and present*, but all either indirect or anticipative. Death is the *close* of a perilous period, which has been successfully gone through : or it is the *waiting time* for a glorious period which will *succeed it*. But of the blessedness of the actual state of death he has not here said *one word*. We will examine the passage.

XXIII. First, then, in death the warfare, the course, the pilgrimage, the toil, the danger, *all are over and gone back for ever*. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith," such is the blessed result of death to the believer. There is no more scorn of the world, no more danger of falling, of the preacher's becoming a cast-away. In death Paul has reached the position of the Grecian runner who has *come to the goal and runs no more*. Victory is his, and he ceases to strive. And what is the next thing which the Apostle expects as the consequence? *It is the crown*. When? As soon as he dies? No; not as soon as he dies. *The crown is his, but it is not then given to him*. It is laid up for him, and will be given. When? At the second coming of Christ; at the resurrection: and not one hour before. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me *at that day*, and not to me only, but unto all them that love *His appearing*." Here, then, is the exact and particular state

\* 2 Tim. iv. 7.



in which Paul tells us that death places him, and all who resemble him: *they are victors who have ceased to strive and who await the reward of victory.*

XXIV. And what, then, is the state of death itself? What is that condition which is not over, as some seem to think, in the very act of dying, but which continues from that act of dying to the second coming of the Lord? It is, so far as Paul here represents it, *a blank*. It is neither the strife for victory, nor the reward for victory. It is like the condition of the Grecian runner, when he stood motionless and exhausted at the goal, in a state of utter inaction. The next *act* in the history of the believer, after he has closed his eyes in death, is opening them in resurrection to receive the reward of victory. *All between is a blank.*

XXV. Or, let us transfer the illustration to the kindred one of the soldier, to which, probably, Paul here also alludes (Liddell and Scott, *αγων*.) The armies have struggled in fierce contest from morning light in this, the concluding fight of the war. Severe has been the struggle, but it has ended in a complete victory. The shadows of night are stealing over the scene, as the defeated army flies in dismay from the field. Word has gone through the victorious host,—“*The victory is won.*” See yonder soldier! He has stood his ground; he has watched the foe; he has seen the waning and the waxing of the fight; he has charged home with fierce onset at command; he has seen his foe retiring through the fast-falling shades of night. With the shout of victory in his ears, to which he has lent his own weak voice, he sinks exhausted on the ground he has won. Sleep, unbroken by the memories of past struggle, unbroken by the anticipation of the rewards of victory, chains him down through the night that follows, and not till the bright sun of the morrow shines full upon him does he awake to receive the reward of the soldier's victory. His condition—asleep upon the battle-ground—is the condition which corresponds to Paul's in the intermediate state.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### RESURRECTION.

I. THE low place which the second advent of Christ and the resurrection from the dead occupy in modern theology is very apparent. Attempts to revive the importance of these doctrines, to which, on all hands, it is allowed that paramount importance is attached in Scripture and the symbol of the Apostolic age, have often been made; but these attempts are felt to be of a spasmodic kind. The reason it is not hard to find. The popular doctrine of the intermediate state

renders the second coming of Christ, and the resurrection of the dead, meaningless and purposeless things to all who have died in the faith of Christ.

II. To those who believe with Bishop Butler and John Wesley that their organised bodies are no essential part of them, but that they are in reality immortal spirits who have become connected in their life with a material body which they lay aside, much to their advantage, in death, of what value can the doctrine of the resurrection be to them personally? If they believed in it at all, they could only regard it as an event for which, so far as their existence and well-being was concerned, they could see no use. To one who believes with Calvin, that the day of death is the day of redemption, of what value to him personally can the second coming of the Lord be? Of none whatever. When Butler, Calvin, and Wesley, represent the general theology of Christendom on the intermediate state, we cannot wonder that the doctrine of the resurrection, with which that of the second coming of Christ is essentially connected, should occupy a very secondary place indeed.

III. But all this is changed when we come to the source and fountain of all true theology,—the Bible. We there find the resurrection to occupy a paramount position in Christian faith. We have no hesitation in saying that Scriptural teaching on the subject of the resurrection fully establishes the theory we have throughout maintained. We maintain, and we will show, that Scripture does not merely teach that without resurrection the believer would not attain to the full consummation of his glory, but that it teaches us that *without resurrection there would be no future life of any kind for the believer at all.*

IV. We will not now occupy our readers' attention with any minute examination of the teaching of the Old Testament on this question. We have, indeed, already considered it in another form in our ninth chapter, where we saw that the Hades condition was regarded as one of death. For, if this state be one of complete death, and if an after life be yet, as it is undoubtedly, taught in the Old Testament, the after life could only be looked for in connection with a resurrection. We here simply content ourselves with saying that every passage in the Old Testament which affirms a future life for the believer, does so in connection only with his resurrection. We subjoin references to some of these places, and defy objectors to produce one passage from the Old Testament which tells us plainly and openly that there will be life of any kind in Hades, or anywhere else, during that time and state which intervenes from the close of this life to the day of resurrection.\*

V. What we chiefly wish in this chapter to do is to call our readers' attention to the teaching of the New Testament upon this question, and in especial to that chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians

\* Job xiv. 10—15; xix. 25. Isaiah xxvi. 19; xxv. 8. Hos. xiii. 14. Dan. xii. 2.

in which the clearest, fullest, and most minute, as well as grand and spirit-stirring description is given of the believer's resurrection that is to be met with in Scripture. We do this the more readily, because it is only from the New Testament, and particularly from the writings of Paul, that some few passages are quoted which are generally supposed to teach a doctrine of the intermediate state different from that here advocated. We would therefore show, before we proceed to the consideration of those passages, what we are to learn from the New Testament about the resurrection. If we do not mistake, it will not only guide us to the true interpretation of those passages, but will enable us to explain satisfactorily the sense of some of the phrases most relied on for the view opposed to ours.

VI. We will dwell but for a few moments on our Lord's words previous to the resurrection of Lazarus. To us they seem very plainly to teach the truth, that when the believer here loses life there is no after life for him but in resurrection. This is certainly the apparent force of his language. It will, more readily at least, dispose us to accept the teaching of St. Paul, which is as express as words can possibly be.

VII. Martha meets Jesus outside of Bethany.\* Forthwith bursts from her lips the pent-up feeling of her heart—"Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." That her brother was dead—really and truly dead, whatever death might be—that was the source of her grief. Does Jesus by way of comfort tell her that her brother was then in the enjoyment of life and joy in heaven, or Paradise, or Abraham's bosom, or wherever believers are popularly supposed to go when they die? Not a word of this kind, such as is readily poured out now when mourners are being soothed by our Platonic divines, fell from the lips of Christ. He points her on to resurrection as the time when her brother should recover his life—"Thy brother shall rise again."

VIII. But it may be said that Christ here only spoke of *the body of Lazarus, and not of Lazarus himself*: that, consequently, while he allowed that the body was dead, yet the soul—the true and real Lazarus—might be alive and in joy. But we must surely take our Lord's words as he uses them Himself. When He says something of *Lazarus* it does not become us to say He means it of something that is *not Lazarus*. And here we may see the danger of such alteration of language, for it will virtually lead us to deny the reality of the resurrection. If when Christ allows that Lazarus was dead, we are to suppose He meant *the body of Lazarus*, and not the *real Lazarus*, we must suppose, also, when He tells us that Lazarus will rise again, that He meant only the *body of Lazarus*, and not the *true Lazarus himself*. Hence we see that such an alteration of language as our Platonic divines are compelled to make, leads them to one of the earliest heresies—the denial of the reality of man's resurrection.

\* John xi. 21.

Only that can rise which dies. If the true man does not die, the true man cannot rise. If the true man, then, does not die, there is for the true man no resurrection from the dead. We are compelled, therefore, in order to avoid a deadly heresy, to take our Lord's words as He uses them Himself. We are compelled, therefore, to accept from Him that *Lazarus*—true and real Lazarus, however we may choose to define him—was dead, and would not possess life until He who was the resurrection and the life chose to call him from his grave. It ought not to be difficult to make us take our Lord's words as He was pleased to use them. It is, indeed, presumption of the most glaring kind to alter Christ's words so as to suit any theory of our own.

IX. But it is sometimes said, that our Lord does in this very place make use of language which compels us to believe that, while we might popularly say that Lazarus was dead, because all we could see of him, viz., his body, was dead, Lazarus himself was not dead. The words of Christ which are relied on for this are His words in verse 26, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me *shall never die*." It is often supposed from these words that while a believer may, in popular language, be said to die, because he appears to die, yet that he does not really and truly die, because his soul survives death, and is truly himself.

X. It does not seem to occur to persons who put this interpretation upon our Lord's words, that it leads them of necessity to the recognition of a theory which they are just as resolute to refuse as that which teaches that believers, body and soul, in death lose their entire existence. For it will be seen, from the most casual examination of this place, that what our Lord here affirms, *He expressly confines to believers*. It is only of him who believeth in Him that He says that he shall never die. If, then, the meaning of this passage were, that while the bodies of believers died, yet the souls of believers did not die at that period popularly called death, it would follow that *both bodies and souls of unbelievers did really and truly die at that time*. For it is only faith that preserves from this death. But, according to our Platonic divines, the souls of the wicked survive death just as truly as those of the righteous, and, therefore, even they must allow that the death here spoken of is not that first death which is common to all men, but that second death which the ungodly shall endure hereafter, but from which believers shall be wholly exempt.

XI. That interpretation which the reason of the thing would lead us to put upon the words of Christ would have been seen at once to be the true one, if only our Lord's words had been properly translated. That proper translation is, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall not die *for ever*." Any one acquainted with Greek will see this to be the proper translation. It is so translated in the Rheimish version, following the Latin Vulgate, which exactly follows the Greek. We thus see, at once, that our Lord is not here speaking at



all of the first death, but solely of the second or eternal death, and that, consequently, His words in this twenty-sixth verse do not prevent our taking His teaching elsewhere in the chapter in its natural sense. That teaching we saw to be, that believers cease to exist at the period of death, and do not regain life until resurrection. We now turn to the teaching of the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. xv.

XII. We will first attend to what he tells us in the thirty-second verse. His words there are—"If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." In the first part of this verse, where he speaks of fighting with beasts at Ephesus, he refers to the great perils and persecutions he endured in that city for the sake of Christ. He had but just come from Ephesus when he wrote his Epistle to Corinth, and hence we see the propriety of his reference to dangers but very recently endured there. But in reality in this reference he implies all the persecution and troubles of his life incurred for Christ; the labours, the stripes, the deaths, the shipwrecks, the perils faced or endured for the love of that dear Lord who had chosen him to be His apostle. What does he say of this whole life of his spent for Christ, and at Christ's command? He tells us that it would have been of no use or advantage to him if there was no resurrection from the dead!

XIII. Now, how is this for a moment consistent with the popular view of the intermediate state of the believer, that view held by Calvin, or Wesley, or Butler? According to this view, the believer, on death, is at once admitted to a new and happy life, without waiting for resurrection at all. It may be, and is with some of this Platonic school, that resurrection may *add* to their glory, but they all, without exception, maintain that the intermediate state is for believers a condition of true life, and true joy, far beyond anything here possessed. All the sins, and troubles, and cares, and weariness of this world are left behind, and the peace and life of God enjoyed. Such a condition, though it might be possible to imagine a higher, would be worth the toils and dangers of Paul's life on earth, were they multiplied a thousandfold, to obtain.

XIV. But is this Paul's view of the matter? No, nothing in the smallest degree resembling it. He tells us, on the contrary, that all his life spent for Christ would not be of any advantage to him whatsoever if there was no resurrection. Without a resurrection, he would have endured all without any profit. Paul then knew of no intermediate state such as Calvin and Wesley taught. He considered the condition of man, from the time he died to the time he rose, to be a blank.

XV. But he goes even farther than this in the latter clause of the verse. In the former he told us that all his sufferings for Christ would have been of no advantage to him without a resurrection. In the latter clause he intimates that the Epicurean maxim would be a

more sensible one to follow than the Christian if there were no resurrection. If there were no resurrection, he tells us, then it would be best "to eat and to drink, for to-morrow we die." This was the maxim of the Epicurean school. We find it in Isaiah xxii. 13, as existing among the ungodly Jews in that prophet's time. We find it expressed over and over again in the writings of Horace and other Epicurean writers: "Be wise, decant the wine, and cut off long expectations from your short space of life. Even whilst we speak, envious time has fled. Enjoy to-day; trust not in the least to to-morrow."\*

XVI. Such was the famous Epicurean maxim on which the heathen world acted. They believed in no hereafter state. They knew that they must die some time; might die to-morrow: and they believed that death was utter and final annihilation. Hence this short life was their all. They taught then that it should afford as much delight as it possibly could, since, beyond its narrow confines, they could have no delight at all. Death put an end to joy. How does Paul regard this maxim? He tells us it would be the wise maxim to follow, *if there was no resurrection*. Paul then knew nothing of the popular creed of reward and punishment before resurrection, and during the state of death. To him the idea of a shadow-land, where ghosts enjoyed and suffered according as men lived now, was as ridiculous as it was in the eyes of Lucian or of Horace. He lays it down as his deliberate opinion that if there was no resurrection, Epicurus was the wisest of philosophers; *i.e.*, that death was truly the cessation of existence, as Epicurus taught; during it there was no reward or punishment, no pleasure and no pain. It was because there would be a resurrection that Epicurus was wrong. Plato's shadow-land, the shadow-land of Platonic Christendom, was, to the mind of Paul, a foolish myth.

XVII. We will now turn to another verse of this chapter, to see how Paul repeats this view of his in other language. He is speaking of the resurrection of Christ as the seal of the truth of the Gospel. He tells the Corinthians that if Christ was not raised, their faith was vain (v. 17). The overthrow of the doctrine of Christ's resurrection would stamp the teaching of the Apostles, of the New Testament, of Christ Himself, and of the prophets who prophesied of him, as untrue. The consequences of the overthrow of the resurrection of Christ would be fatal to that entire revelation both of Old and New Testament, which based itself upon the reality of that fact. Man could then believe in nothing in the Scripture, simply because it was there. He would be thrown upon what natural religion could teach. One consequence of the overthrow of the resurrection of Christ would be that all "they which are fallen asleep in Christ *are perished*" (v. 18).

XVIII. What is the meaning of saying that if there were no resurrection of Christ, and, consequently, no resurrection of His people,

\* Horace. Carm. i. 11.

then all there were at that very time *perished*? Surely Paul does not mean to say that they were, if the resurrection was untrue, at that moment suffering the horrors of a misery which never was to end! Who will say that such would be the fate of men who had truly, and at much self-sacrifice, followed what they believed truth, and believed in Him whom they recognised as truth, simply because He had not been raised from the dead? But if anyone could believe in a Deity capable of thus treating the best of mankind, it is quite evident that even if the Scriptures asserted such a punishment, which they certainly do not, their *whole authority* was taken from them on the supposition that Christ was not raised from the dead. *No doctrine* would then be true simply because it was in Scripture, and so the same overthrow of the doctrine of Christ's resurrection, which overthrew the hopes of believers, would also dispel any fears which might be derived simply from the Scriptures. If men had nothing to hope from their promises, they had as little to dread from their threats. The Scriptural Hell would have as little credit as the Scriptural Heaven, Paradise, or Resurrection. We cannot, therefore, suppose Paul to mean that believers in Christ, if Christ had not been raised, would then be enduring the agonies of that Hell which Augustine and his followers teach to be the Hell of Scripture. We are obliged, by the very reason of the thing, to suppose that "perish" here means something else.

XIX. In fact, we are reduced to the terrible necessity of taking "perish," and the Greek word of which it is the translation, in their proper, natural, primary, and generally recognised sense. "To perish," says Webster, in his *Dictionary of the English Language*, means "to be destroyed, to go to destruction, to pass away, to come to nothing, to be blotted from existence, to be ruined, to be lost, to lose life, to lose vital power." Such is the meaning of "to perish," according to the highest authority in the English language. Exactly similar is the sense of that Greek word, of which it is the translation. (See Liddell's *Dictionary on Apollumi*.) The reason of the thing only leads us to take the language of Scripture in its natural and primary sense.

XX. Paul then tells us that if Christ were not raised from the dead, they who have fallen asleep in Him would have come to nothing, been destroyed, been annihilated. He here simply re-affirms the *Epicurean doctrine*. As he quoted their favourite maxim in v. 32, he here repeats another phrase of theirs when he says that believers would have *perished*, if Christ had not been raised from the dead. Now it is in the light of the Epicurean doctrine which is what Paul throughout this chapter is combating that we are to read the meaning of *perish*. If Christ were not raised believers would have "perished" in the sense in which Epicurus taught that all men perished when they died. What was that sense? It was not merely that they had perished *for a time*, but that they had perished *for ever*. In the mouth of the



Epicurean this perishing was an *everlasting effect*. An effect which would only endure *for a time*: a death which would be followed by an eternal life; a destruction which would be followed by an endless restoration: this was wholly opposed to the death and destruction of the Epicurean school. At such a death, and such a destruction, they would laugh as not death or destruction at all, as, in fact, little beyond a *sleep*.

XXI. Now what is the teaching of St. Paul? He tells us that it is only the resurrection of Christ which prevents the destruction taught by Epicurus from being the exact truth. Resurrection alone saves from everlasting perishing and ruin. Then, according to Paul, the dead in Christ are in that very condition which, *if there were no resurrection from it*, would be the very condition which Epicurus taught would be eternal. Paul here tells us that the actual condition of the dead in Christ is what Epicurus taught. But what prevents it from being Epicurus' doctrine? *Resurrection!* That changes its character altogether. It is not Epicurus' destruction, Epicurus' death, Epicurus' annihilation, at all! That was eternal, everlasting, this is but for a moment in eternity. *Viewed in the light of resurrection*, death and destruction become a sleep, because at a coming day their power and sway will be broken for ever. Paul allows the condition of those who sleep in Christ to be for the time the loss of being, but in the light of the resurrection he shows all this reversed for ever.

XXII. It is this view, and this view alone, which suits the reasoning of the Apostle immediately after. In the next verse he says, "*If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable.*" Paul here speaks of one life, that life here possessed. *When does he look for another life?* Calvin, Butler, Wesley, and our Platonic School would say, he looked for it the moment he died! But Paul says something quite different. *His next life is resurrection life*: "*In Christ shall all be made alive.* But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's *at His coming.*" Here are Paul's *two lives*. His idea is not that of *one unbroken life*, begun here, continued in another form through the intermediate state, continued in a yet more glorious form after the resurrection. This is the common view. It is not Paul's. With him there are two lives, distinct from and unlike each other. One ends when man dies. The other begins when man rises, and never ends. From the termination of the first life he passes on in rapid thought to the commencement of the second. All between seems to him as nothing, because it is a sleep. But when does the second life begin? *At the coming of Christ!*

XXIII. This grand chapter of God's Word then tells us very clearly what is God's mind upon the intermediate state, and especially what were the opinions of the Apostle Paul. With him death was a reality, so fearful a reality that if there were no resurrection the



Epicurean doctrine and maxims would have been his also. The state of death is, with him, *a blank*. But resurrection alters its character wholly in his eyes. That which is to have an end—that whose reign is unfelt—is not the death or destruction of the Epicurean School. It is the blessed sleep of the dead in Christ *because* it will be broken. But *only* because it will be broken. *Unbroken*, it would be that hopeless, endless state of night and darkness to which the School of Epicurus looked as the sad end of man and his hopes and joys.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### TIME AND SLEEP.

I. It will probably be objected to our view of Hades that it represents the entire state of death, reaching, in the case of the first departed dead, over a period of many thousand years, in a very gloomy point of view, and in a view infinitely less cheering than popular theology, represented by Wesley's and Calvin's description of death, brings it before us.

II. We allow that it may appear at first sight to do so. But even if it did, the question is not which is the most pleasing, but which is true? We fully allow that our view of Hades represents it, while it lasts, in a very uninviting aspect, and that, if it were to endure for ever, it would be a view of as gloomy a kind as it would be well possible to conceive. But when we consider that this whole state of death is represented in Scripture *as a punishment*, we do not know how it could well be represented in any other than a gloomy view. Punishments are rarely pleasant or cheerful in their nature. It is all very well for Plato and other heathen men, who were not acquainted with the cause of death, to represent it in the light of a friend whose presence we should welcome as a blessing; but for a Christian man, who knows it to be a punishment to represent it in this light, is strange and inconsistent. To represent it in dark colours, so far from being an objection to our view, is a recommendation of it. This state of death, the whole of it, is one of punishment while it lasts, and therefore a cheerful description of it, or of any part of it, would be simply making a mockery of what is represented in the Bible as a sad reality. If God has inflicted it as a punishment, are we to come forward and say that it is none? Are we to presume to describe it in the very identical terms by which God has described our redemption and deliverance from it?

III. God meant that we should be impressed with the terrible nature of sin by the aspect of its punishment,—death. And so we should be, if a philosophic theology did not try, with all its might, to defeat God's end. The aspect of death, the knowledge that it has

deprived of life and thought one who had rejoiced in existence, and sent abroad his thoughts through the immensity of Creation, this is well calculated to impress us survivors with the terrible nature of sin. It is not for us to say that this terrible death is redemption.

IV. But while it is a punishment, and meant to be taken as such, and meant to impress our minds very much, yet God has so mercifully arranged things, that it is chiefly, or rather altogether, *the approach of death which is felt to be a punishment* by the child of God. It is preceded generally by weakness, by pain. The anticipation of it as consigning us to the grave, and darkness, and corruption, and robbing us of existence, this is terrible, as it was meant to be. But when death has actually come and commenced its reign, the punishment, though really endured, ceases to be felt.

V. And this leads us to consider a very important feature in this whole inquiry. It is that death, being a deep, unbroken sleep, *has no perceptible duration*. Time, to the sleeper, is *nothing*. Time, to one who lives, is long or short, tedious or pleasant, according to the number of years, and their occupation. Time, to one who sleeps, is not time, because its passage is not felt. One moment, or one year, or ten thousand years, *to him who sleeps throughout*, are all the very same. Each period is alike to the sleeper but as a moment of time, or rather as no time at all. He sleeps,—he wakes. He knows nothing else when he wakes but that he has been asleep. When he awakes it seems as though but a moment before he had gone asleep. This feature of death is a most important one, and solves some of the difficulties connected with our subject. The view we have just given of it as practically annihilating time is not our view, adopted for a purpose, but is the view universally taken of it.

VI. Among the insipid ecclesiastical legends of the fifth century, the historian Gibbon selects one which he deems worthy of being rescued from the obscurity to which he would consign the rest. It is the legend of The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, a legend so recommending itself to the human mind, that it has been copied, in one form or other, into the legendary tales that have struck the imagination of mankind from the cold shores of Northern Europe to the extremities of Africa and Asia.\* Seven young men of Ephesus take refuge in a cave from the persecution of the Emperor Decius. The tyrant orders the entrance to be blocked up with large stones, that they may perish with hunger. God causes them to fall into a deep sleep, which continues unbroken for nearly two hundred years. At the end of that period, so eventful in its transactions, when the stones that lay at the cave's mouth were being removed for use, the rays of the bright sun burst into the cavern, and the sleepers awoke from their slumber. *The interval was supposed by them to have been but a few hours' space.* That period during which the seat of empire had been changed from Rome to Constantinople, during which the hordes of northern bar-

\* Gibbon: *Decline and Fall*, ch. xxxiii.

barians had overrun and conquered the fairest provinces of Augustus and Trajan, during which Polytheism had ceased to be the religion of the State, and Christianity had taken its place: all this period was supposed by the sleepers to have been the period of a man's ordinary sleep. Hours of that period had seemed to those who lived as ages: by the sleepers those centuries of action, change, disaster, and suffering, were supposed to have been short hours. To use the language of Gibbon, "*the interval was annihilated, the slumber of two hundred years was momentary.*" Such is the power of sleep over time. It reduces a century to the limit of a day: it makes both alike to be to the sleeper as no time at all. Between sleeping and awaking is—not time—but nothing.

VII. To the legend of old time, whose sentiment has been endorsed by the imagination of mankind, we will add the testimony of the poet. Tennyson is speculating on death and its nature. Taking generally the Platonic view, he turns aside for a moment to consider what it would be if the soul were wrapt in as true a sleep as the body, during the period before resurrection:—

"If sleep and death be truly one,  
And every spirit's folded bloom  
Thro' all its inter-vital gloom  
In some long trance should slumber on,

"Unconscious of the sliding hour,  
Bare of the body, might it last,  
And silent traces of the past  
Be all the colour of the flower

"So then were nothing lost to man;  
So that still garden of the souls  
In many a figured leaf enrolls  
The total world since life began

"And love will last as pure and whole  
As when he loved me here in Time,  
And at the spiritual prime  
Re-waken with the dawning soul."—*In Memoriam.*

Here the poet beautifully reviews death as a sleep, and pronounces the important verdict that, viewed in this light, *nothing is in it lost to man.*

VIII. To the common sentiment of mankind, endorsed alike by the historian and the poet, we will add the conclusion of one of the subtlest and truest logicians that has ever lived. Whately has ceased for the time to reason and to think. The keen intellect that could so readily detect a sophism, or flash a clear light upon an abstruse question, has vanished. But his thoughts, committed to the press, have not perished. He, too, looked closely and searchingly into this Hades state. It was, one day, to be his own, as it was that of so many great minds, some greater even than his, that had shed a glory before him upon the old halls of Oxford. Keble and Arnold, Butler of Durham, and Locke, Bacon the monk, and old William of Wykeham, how were they engaged while the slow ages were passing over

the living generation? Whately has not told his mind, though we think we know full well what his mind on this subject was. But he has told us what his keen reason told him time would be to great and little minds alike, if so be that man's whole state, from his dying to his rising, were indeed a sleep. "The long and dreary interval," says Archbishop Whately, "between death and the day of judgment (supposing the intermediate state to be a profound sleep) *does not exist at all, except in the imagination*. To the party concerned, *there is no interval whatsoever*; but to each person (according to this supposition) *the moment of closing his eyes in death will be instantly succeeded by the sound of the last trumpet*, which shall summon the dead, even though ages shall have intervened."\*

IX. And thus we see the true relation of sleep to time. And thus we read the judgment of mankind upon the Hades' state, supposing that state to be one of sleep. *It has its terrors for the imagination*. It has for the imagination its true and real terrors. They cannot be overdrawn. We shudder at the gloom, the silence, the darkness, the corruption that await us. We shudder at the pleasant play of fancy gone, the lofty flight of imagination in the dust, the consecutive reasoning of the logician stayed, the sagacious wisdom of the statesman departed, the throb of affection stilled, the sentiment of awe, of delight, of praise unfelt. But who are *we* for whom death has these terrors of the imagination? *We are the living*. We are they whom God would affect and save in life by the aspect of death. For the dead these terrors have no existence. They felt them when they might have been of service: they ceased to feel them the moment they could be of none. The child of God has gone to sleep. Time is for him annihilated. It passes over his head more rapidly than the lightning flashes over the sky. We can follow its movements, and therefore the flashing of lightning is a thing of time. The dead cannot note the progress of time, and therefore time does not exist for them. God's time is over. The light of the day of Christ shines into the tomb, and Christ's sleepers awake and come forth. The world's history has passed since some of them went to sleep, and still that long period is to them no more than is his period of sleep who died but the very moment before Christ appeared. The sleeper has lost no time, whatever were the period of his sleep. Eternity now is his, and time taken from eternity affects it no more than the taking of water from the fountain, which in taking is supplied from the unfailing source. Death, as a sleep, interposes no time between dying and the coming of Christ, between death and resurrection.

X. Before we leave this chapter, we will just take the opportunity of stating that in that branch of the Church Catholic to which we belong, the doctrine of the sleep of the entire man, body and soul, in death, is at least left at liberty for each man to hold or not as he thinks to be true. Among the Articles of the Church of England, as

\* *Scripture Revelations of a Future State*. Seventh Edition, p. 95.



drawn out in Edward VI.'s time, there was one which declared that the souls of the deceased do not perish with their bodies, nor sleep without sense till the last day. With a wise moderation, to say the least, this Article of Edward was omitted in the revision of the Articles in the reign of Elizabeth.\* The omission of this Article was made either for the purpose of leaving the question an open one, or because the opinion upon it of the leading theologians in Elizabeth's reign differed from that held in Edward's. With either view we are satisfied, for either view leaves us at perfect freedom to put forward what Scripture has taught upon the subject, without exposing ourselves to the charge of putting forward opinions contrary to those of the Church to whose Articles of religion we have cordially subscribed.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### THEORY OF SLEEP: ITS DOCTRINAL ASPECTS.

I. BEFORE we proceed to consider the objections which we are aware may be made from Scripture to our view of Hades as a state of sleep, it will be well to consider the various aspects of such a view towards various doctrines and ideas presented in Scripture or entertained by men.

II. It is well known to all readers of Scripture how perpetually the hopes of believers are pointed on to the second coming of Christ and the resurrection, as the period when those long-cherished hopes are to meet with their fulfilment. We may say that this *is the one sole hope placed before the mind of the Church*. Men may find a passage here and there which seems, in the case of an individual, to make his hope receive its fulfilment at the period of death, as in the case of Paul to which we shall by and bye particularly advert. But we affirm that there is not a single passage in the Old or New Testament which directs *the hope of the Church* to any other event than to the second coming of Christ and its circumstances. As a relief from pain and persecution death may be often alluded to, but as the period *when the promises in Christ are to be fulfilled*, we defy any man to bring forward so much as one text which directs the Church's hope to any other period than the second coming of Christ. That—and that alone—is the time of redemption.

III. Now, it is quite obvious that the theory of the believer's sleep gives its full importance and place to this grand doctrine of Scripture. If we believe that during the intermediate state there is no consciousness whatever—that during it the believer is alike, as to every part of him, precisely as though he was not, and had never been—that he can expect no change to consciousness and joy before Christ comes again—that, but for the resurrection, his present state, a perished

\* *History of the Church of England*. J. B. S. Carwithen, A.D. 1562.

one, must abide for ever: on this supposition, we see that the hope of believers is, and must be, and can only be, fixed upon the second coming of the Lord. In this case we can never for a moment lose sight of it. Our minds cannot fix themselves for a single instant upon *any* intermediate event or state as a resting-place. Beyond the state of Hades, as beyond this sinful life, they spring forward with a bound to the time when Christ comes to awake them up to life. The second coming of necessity and as a matter of course occupies that place in the faith and hopes of the Church which Scripture tells the Church to have.

IV. It is quite true, however, that such a hope and faith as a vital influential active principle is scarcely ever powerful in the Church. Believers, seeing the prominent place which the second coming of Christ occupies in Scripture, are indeed, every now and then, trying to awaken the mind of the Church to its vast importance. But somehow the effort seems a spasmodic one. The eloquent preacher or writer incites an interest, but it appears to be a *forced interest*, and soon dies away. And it will be remarked that *the great, often the sole*, motive which rouses even this passing interest is the belief that the second coming *is close at hand*, as we here judge of time, *i.e.*, that it will come this year, or a year hence, or within a few years. When the failure of the hopes thus roused becomes manifest by the lapse of time; when the Church begins again to think that Christ may not come in this generation, or, perhaps, within a hundred years, or even for a longer period, then at once, and irresistibly, the doctrine of the second coming seems to fade away from the mind of the Church *as a practical thing*, and though men may continue to talk of it as a felt matter of duty, their speech savours more of cant than of sincerity.

V. The ordinary doctrine of the Church on the intermediate state of the believer accounts for this. We would say it necessitates it. The second coming may continue to appear connected with *great general consequences*, which are most desirable to be effected, and which never can be effected at any earlier period, but *to the individual believer*, so far as *his* great interests are concerned it dwindles down to a matter of very secondary importance. Why? The popular view of death rises up between it and supplants it. What great matter is it to him—the man who will depart this life before the Lord comes again—whether He comes within a hundred or a thousand years? He will have gone to Christ in the full possession of all the powers and functions of the higher life, and enjoy the heavenly pursuits during this intermediate state. He knows, indeed, that *his body* must, until then, slumber in the dust of the ground, and in accordance with Scripture he must believe that his condition will not be absolutely perfected until the resurrection. But this is all to him *very theoretical*. He is wholly unable to see or to understand *how* the union with his body can add either to his glory or his happiness. As

he is told it he cannot well deny it, but also what he is told of his state on death absolutely prevents his being able to conceive in the remotest degree how it can be. Has not Pope thus sung of death?—

“The world recedes! it disappears!  
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears  
With sounds seraphic ring!  
Lord, lend your wings: I mount! I fly!  
O grave! where is thy victory?  
O death! where is thy sting?”

Has not Calvin, and the whole Church taught him that at the bare mention of death he is to lift up his head because death is the messenger of his redemption?

VI. Here is what accounts for the apathy of the Church on the second coming of Christ, for it is in truth that which *produces it*. The moment it ceases to believe that the second coming will probably be within a generation, that moment the second coming occupies and must occupy a very subordinate place in its thoughts. Death, then, takes its place, and must, on the ordinary view of death, do so. For death gives to each believer what the second coming would give him if it took place in his lifetime. What, *individually*, does the second coming leave him to desire? *Practically nothing*. The resurrection, no doubt, it places before him as a thing to be looked for, but then it renders it impossible for him to see how this resurrection can possibly add to his life or joy. It is no wonder that numbers who hold the common view of the intermediate state should be perpetually sliding off into what is very like the heresy condemned by Paul in the Corinthian Church, of saying that the resurrection *is a spiritual event*, and has already taken place when each believer in the second birth passed from death in sin to life in righteousness. The old notion of things that don't appear being much the same as things which do not exist comes before the mind, and that resurrection ceases to be a reality which is not felt to be of use. The theory of the believer's sleep in death, then, derives vast support from the fact that it gives at once, and most naturally, that prominence and importance which Scripture attaches to the second coming of Christ, not merely as regards the general interests of the world at large at the time when it takes place, but also as regards the interests and happiness of every believer who has before it fallen asleep in Jesus.

VII. Not only does the Scripture give a prominent place to the second coming as affecting the best interests of all believers, and therefore to be ever remembered in every age of the Church, but it has also given a very prominent place to this doctrine *as an event represented by it as practically near at hand to every believer*. We need not quote texts for a feature in Scripture which has been universally remarked by friend and foe. To the Apostolic age the second coming of Christ was, throughout Gospels and Epistles, represented as “near,” “nigh.” It is quite evident that Scripture calls upon *all believers*, every generation of the Church which has lived and died

since He rose to heaven, to regard His second coming as also nigh at hand to them. There is no distinction apparently made by that Spirit who inspired the writings of the New Testament between this event as being nearer by any appreciable amount of time to one generation than to another.

VIII. Now all this has excited a great deal of thought upon the part of thinking men. Believers are puzzled by it; unbelievers mock at it. It seems strange how a warning could be given to any age of an event *as near them* which in the ordinary calculation of men was not near them, and how this warning could be kept hanging, as it were, over the heads of every succeeding generation *as near it*, which was not by common calculation near it. And so, as generation after generation has passed away from the scene, as expectation after expectation of the second coming as to take place in such or such a half century has been roused and disappointed, faith has often felt itself confounded, and unbelief has very often felt itself elated, as though the second coming were after all a myth.

IX. Now it is surely a matter of the deepest interest and importance in itself, and one affording a powerful support to the theory of death as a sleep to the entire man, that this theory appears to solve all the difficulties and doubts which have been just alluded to. For this theory of the sleep of the believer during the intermediate state, when closely and candidly considered, practically and sensibly places the doctrine of the second advent *as not only near every individual and every generation of the Church, but as near to every individual and every generation of the Church as it is to any other*. By it the second coming of Christ is practically as near to the generation which was contemporaneous with Christ as it is to the generation that has but just passed away, though eighteen hundred years of busy life here have intervened! By it the second coming of Christ is as near to His first martyr Stephen who died, we believe, in the very year of Christ's crucifixion, as it is to the last believer who, but the moment before Christ appears in the clouds of heaven, has commended his spirit into his Saviour's hands and keeping, and fallen into the sleep which is broken the very moment it is slept.

X. Now let us apply the ordinary view to the condition of the *Apostolic* age. To them it was said, in numberless places and without any qualification, "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh;" and Paul said of a period some years advanced beyond that of his conversion, "now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." The ordinary theory makes these men alive for nearly two thousand years since these words were said, and yet the Lord has not come to them, nor has their salvation been as yet effected. Now it will be surely allowed that the coming of Christ was not near to those who have been expecting it and looking for it for two thousand years, nor could the difference of some half dozen or dozen years be looked upon as anything appreciable in a period of so great magnitude. But by our



age, and the difference of a few years did make a very appreciable amount when it was taken out of *the lifetime of a man*, and not out of a period of centuries.

XI. Regard thus the doctrine of the second coming, and its attendant circumstances, resurrection and judgment, appear invested with a solemnity and an importance both in the eyes of the righteous and the wicked which they do not possess in the common view. The believer in Christ is brought by it to feel that the second coming of his Lord, and his own resurrection, are indeed nigh, even at the doors. They are brought *practically* home to him as taking place the *very moment that he dies*. Instead of this view putting a long blank space between the believer's death and resurrection, it practically obliterates the actual space that intervenes. No matter what that space may be, this view reduces it, in point of feeling, to a moment of time. The believer dies ! Centuries of struggle, sin, and apprehension may pass over the earth while he lies dead and unconscious : to him all this time is wholly unappreciated. There is no waiting, no expecting. All is to the sleeper but as the sleep of a moment. *He sleeps—he wakes up from sleep—this is his experience.*

XII. We thus see that what we think may put a long blank between the believer and his Saviour has, through the providence of God, only brought them close together. While to die and go in the disembodied spirit in full consciousness into heaven is opposed to Scripture, the scriptural doctrine of the believer's sleep makes the union just as appreciably near. The truth has the very advantage which the falsehood pretends to claim. It enables the reader to take Calvin's words in a true sense, and to regard death as the day of his redemption ; not because while he is dead he obtains salvation, but because the sleep of the period of death *robs it of any length*. *To him who sleeps time is annihilated. To him who sleeps a century is as short as a moment, ten centuries as short as the twinkling of an eye.* To the sleeper, to be at home in the body is to be absent from the Lord,—to depart is to be with Christ,—to die is to rise again,—to sleep is to awake,—to lay aside the corruptible body is to put on the incorruptible body,—to lay aside the earthly house of this tabernacle is to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven ; for between the time that he sleeps and the time that he awakes, between the time of his death and of his resurrection, is *to him* a briefer period than would elapse while an angel winged his way from earth to heaven.

XIII. Is there any undue straining of a point here ? *We are speaking of the departed, not of our feelings about them*,—of the condition of the dead, not of the thoughts of the living. He who has watched the sleep of a sleeper who in dangerous illness has just fallen into a sleep the waking from which will tell whether he is for life or death, knows how long that sleep appears. The time between each ticking of the house-clock appears to the watcher an hour—between each revolution of the minute-hand round the dial appears a year.

But not so with the sleeper. To him the hour-hand on the watch goes as fast as the second-hand which marks the quick pulsations of the heart. *To him there is no such thing as time.* That pale face, in its deep slumber, shows no sense of the slow progress of the hours. The sun has lingered ere it slowly set behind the hill—the shadows of evening have one by one deepened—night has gone wearily on to its darkest—the grey morning has gradually lightened to meridian day—and still he sleeps on, and feels nought of the weary watching of the faces that have gazed on the worn face to see its first return to consciousness. *To the pale sleeper there has been no waiting, no weariness, no time.*

XIV. It is precisely so with the believer who has fallen asleep in Jesus. The length of the sleep is nought to him, for he feels it not. An hour, a century, ten centuries, are all to him precisely the same. He feels the lapse of the century exactly as he feels the lapse of the hour, *i.e.*, he does not feel either at all. The living believer may be straining his eyes to see the dawning of the day of Christ: he may, through manifold temptations, feel the days of his temptations to be lengthening themselves out into interminable years; he may at heart complain that the Lord delayeth either the time of His coming or the period of His servant's release: but there is no weary waiting like this on the part of the believer who has fallen asleep. The trumpet will sound—Christ will appear—the day of salvation will dawn—the sleeper will awaken out of the sleep perhaps of ages, and feel as though it were but the moment before that he had fallen asleep.

“ If death and sleep be truly one,  
And every spirit's folded bloom  
Through all its interval gloom  
In some long trance should slumber on; ”

if this description of the poet be, as we believe it to be, the teaching of Scripture, then the age to unconsciousness slides by as rapidly as the hour, and the feelings with which we wake at the “spiritual prime” will be as fresh as when we lay down in our sleep.

XV. If the doctrine of the believer's sleep be thus full of hope to the child of God, it certainly presents death to the sinner in a light far more awful and terrible than does the ordinary view. *For, for him too, time is annihilated.* He sleeps unreconciled to God through Jesus Christ! He may sleep, as the ages here roll on, a hundred or a thousand years. But the hundred or the thousand years are to him the very same, *i.e.*, are to him *as nothing*. And during them there is and can be to him *no change*. And so practically and appreciably by him, the moment he lies down and sleeps that moment he wakes and rises up to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and hear his sentence to the unquenchable fire of hell.

XVI. Thus to all men alike life now is *all in all*. Now only is the accepted time—now is the day of salvation. The grave is that “night” which is fast coming, and in which “no man can work.” Solomon's

words are true to the letter: "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Hades, whither thou goest." All is there, for good and evil alike, *a blank*. But it is a blank which to all alike vanishes as soon as it has settled down. There is no weary waiting there. The cloud has gathered thick, and as soon as it has gathered it is dispersed. This life is seen to stand upon the very threshold of the next. The twilight of its departure is at once succeeded by eternal day, or the sentence to everlasting night.

XVII. And with this sleep of all men in Hades away fly a hundred errors which have been brought into the Church. It is indeed remarkable how many errors against which the holders of Scriptural truth have, and often ineffectually, contended, are at once, by this doctrine, dispersed into the air. It is on this dark mysterious region of Hades that the teachers of error have laid hold, in order, upon their appeals to human hopes, and fears, and imaginings, to base their own false, but often profitable, dogmas. The servant of Christ will have no field of labour hereafter among Hades and ghosts who have not been saved. If he is to open his mouth and spend his strength for Christ, if haply he may win one more gem for the crown of his Redeemer, he must do so now, for he will be no evangelist to the dead. If life eternal is to be brought to the myriads of China, of India, and of Japan, who now "sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death," the Christian missionary must hasten now, with the words of life upon his lips, and cry aloud, amid the cruel unclean scenes of Heathenism, "O, hear now the words of the Life-giver while yet life is yours, for there is no other world where we can speak or you can hear." If the sinner is to receive forgiveness of sins, and that "holiness without which no man can see God," he must receive them now, ere his spirit—it may be struggling forth from the rent and broken earthly body—has left his clay. For where sleep reigns unbroken, and ears cannot hear, and the mind's eyes cannot see, and no change can come, there can be no more sacrifice for sin, no purgation or forgiveness of sin.

XVIII. Stay, poor mourner at yonder grave! The body over which you bend in sorrow is not more unconscious than its soul for which you pray. Both are at rest till Christ comes. Your prayers are of no avail *for them*. Your dead are in no pain from which you can relieve them. Without pain, without hope or fear, without thought of one kind or other, *they are at rest*. You need write no "Requiescat" on that grey stone, need whisper into the ears of your God no "May he rest." *He is at rest; a deep, unbroken, quiet rest, to whose depth no lullaby of prayer can add.* Go, and pray for thy living ones.

XIX. Stay, thou who in vain addressdest prayer to some saint of God. We stay not to tell thee that prayer to one unseen is for God alone. We question not that he or she whom thou hast chosen for thy patron saint was, indeed, one of God's holiest ones on earth. It may be Paul the great Apostle, or Peter the first choice of Christ, or



the pure maid of Nazareth, from whom He took our flesh, or that true husband who believed in the unspotted honour of his virgin wife! But what matters it to thee how near to God grace drew these noble men and women? They are now asleep. They cannot hear. Ten thousand times ten thousand prayers uttered deep down in thine heart or borne loud and widely on the air cannot reach them. Let thy prayers be to Him who never slumbers or sleeps. Stay, thou who callest thyself the priest of God, when all His believing people are His priests. You stand at what you esteem God's altar; you offer up to God what you esteem God's Eternal Son. *For whom? For the sleeping dead!* For them all that man can do is of no avail. Wert thou all that thou claimest to be, and thy offering all thou assertest, the sleeper while he sleeps is beyond the efficacy of sacrifice, beyond the power of the prayer chanted by a thousand priestly choristers, and resounding with the organ's swell through the pillared aisles of Canterbury, Milan, or Cologne.

XX. And stay, ye modern pretenders to come between the living and the dead, and to convey the thoughts of either to the other. The souls whom you suppose hovering on earth and air, attending our footsteps as we walk, watching over us as we sleep, only waiting your call to come and communicate the secrets of the other world, they are in a slumber more deep than seals our eyelids when we sleep through the watches of the night. Whatever be your art we abhor it. Whatever be your art we bid you dread it. If it is mere cunning slight of human hands, skilful use of mere natural powers, then dread the fate of the impostor. If there is more than this in your art, then only dread your art the more. For it is not human souls that aid you, but those spirits of error who first deceived us, and seek to deceive us to the end.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### OBJECTIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

I. HAVING concluded our argument from Scripture, we now proceed to take notice of those objections from Scripture which are most commonly brought against it. We will not pass over any of these that appear to us of any weight, or which are commended by the common opinion of our opponents as possessed of weight. We will answer them to the best of our ability. We are of opinion that in general we will show them to be of no weight against us. It may, however, be that in some instances our explanation may not appear satisfactory, or may even really be unsatisfactory. In such a case we have only to consider whether inability to explain some two or three texts which appear to be opposed to our view is for one moment to be placed in equipoise to that vast amount of scriptural evidence which we have



accumulated in chapter after chapter of our work. If we are not to accept any doctrine as undoubtedly taught in Scripture until we have satisfactorily cleared up to our own and other minds every text that may appear to be, or may be, connected with it, we fear that we could not accept unhesitatingly almost any doctrine that could be named. The general analogy of Scripture must overbear the apparent inconsistency of a stray text here and there.

II. In considering the objections brought against our theory, we will make a twofold division of them as enabling us to arrange and answer them in the easiest and clearest way. We will take as our first division those objections which are drawn from what is supposed to be taught of the Hades state of those who died before the crucifixion of Christ; and as our second division those objections which are drawn from what is supposed to be taught of the Hades state of those who died after His crucifixion. The former division we have called, "Objections from the Old Testament," although some of these objections are taken from the pages of the New Testament. Such are the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke's Gospel, and the reference to the spirits in prison in the first Epistle of Peter. We place these among the objections from the Old Testament, because they refer to the condition of persons who died ere the ancient dispensation had been abrogated by the death of Christ.

III. The belief of the patriarchs in a future life is very often and very confidently brought forward as a proof that our theory is incorrect. It is said that they expected a life of joy after death, that this faith enabled them to serve God in an evil world, and that consequently the idea that death deprives a man of all existence is contradicted by that just faith of the patriarchs which trusted in life that was to follow after this.

IV. We are quite satisfied that the Patriarchs had such a faith, and we cordially agree with our opponents that their faith was a just and well-grounded one. We do not, however, suppose them guilty of the absurdity of believing that their future life would be enjoyed while they were themselves in the state of death. It was not *during death*, but *after death*, that they looked for their life. Belief in a future life after death is not only a different thing from belief in the continued existence of man during death, but is really, when we look fairly at it, quite inconsistent with it. The Patriarchs did not expect to be alive when they were dead, but to be alive when the power of death was broken. They had not drunk of that Platonic philosophy which blinds our modern divines and makes them believe that men are alive when they are dead. If we will accept the account of their faith which is given us in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and we know not where we can get a better account of it, their faith did not regard the intermediate state at all, but had reference to the *Resurrection*. The city they looked for is yet to come, it is only prepared for them, not possessed: they have not yet received the promises, the hope of

which led them on through their life: that which nerved them to endure their cross was *the hope of "a better resurrection."*\* Calvin, who cannot be consistent in error, explains the latter reference in a way that is consistent with our view, but fatal to his own. He says that the courage of the Old Testament saints would have completely sunk if they had not been sustained by the hope of a blessed resurrection. And Moses Stuart's comment on it is, "*they looked to a resurrection of the body, and in view of this they refused to accept liberation from their torments on the conditions prescribed. They persevered, because their faith enabled them to regard as a certainty the future and glorious resurrection of the just.*"† The faith of the Patriarchs then bore reference to a life that is yet to come, a life which Christ will give at the Resurrection.

V. Our theory that a man is wholly unconscious during the intermediate state is supposed to be overthrown by those passages which represent the ancient believers as expecting to rejoin those who were dead in Hades. Thus Jacob, at the prospect of death, said, "I will go down into Hades unto my son mourning."‡ Reference is supposed to be made in such passages to some invisible place of abode where the souls of men were reunited during death, and dwelt together in a state of conscious relationship with each other, again enjoying the society of those whom they had loved on earth. It would be strange, if such were Jacob's idea of Hades, that he should associate "*mourning*" with that of his going down to rejoin in a happy life the most beloved of his soul! We should rather expect him to say he would *gladly* go down to Joseph. But in reality language such as Jacob here uses is altogether unable to support the theory supposed to be based upon it. Language at least as strong is used of *man in the grave*, where no one dreams of any life. Job says, "There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master."§ Here the grave is spoken of as a place of union and dwelling together, though the idea of life is utterly absent. The Epicurean poet, Horace, who believed in no future life of any kind, or at any time, might, on such evidence, be shown to have believed that men were alive when they were dead, for he uses very similar language of the grave as the place where Æneas and Tullus and Ancus and himself would unite, and yet immediately after this he makes the confession that he and they alike would be but dust and ashes.|| Language such as Jacob's in Genesis is common to mankind, whatever were their notions of the after state. Much better proof than this must be given before we can believe, upon Scriptural grounds, that man is alive in Hades.

VI. Another proof of the continued existence of man in Hades is supposed to be drawn from God's words addressed to Moses in the

\* Heb. xi. 10, 16, 30, 35.—Calvin and M. Stuart.

‡ Gen. xxxvii. 35.

§ Job iii. 18.

† "Comment on Heb. xi. 35."

|| Horace Carm. iv. vii.

wilderness of Horeb, coupled with the famous comment of our Lord upon them.\* God said to Moses, "I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;" and our Lord says, "God is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him." From hence it is asserted that our Lord taught us that *at that very time when He spoke these old Patriarchs were living men*. But it is surely a very presumptuous thing, when our Lord tells us the meaning of His own words and the force of this old expression in Exodus, to put upon them quite another meaning, and a meaning, moreover, quite opposed to our Lord's own teaching in this very place. Our Lord quotes the words to prove "*that the dead are raised*." He tells us *these old Patriarchs are dead but will be raised to life*. Our opponents quote the words in proof *that the Patriarchs are alive!* We will take Christ's teaching in preference to that of uninspired men. Christ's teaching is that the Patriarchs are dead, but that in the promise and purpose of God they may be said to be living, because eternal life is theirs. The words of God in Exodus are proof of *a resurrection of the Patriarchs from death*, and the idea that they were not really dead would only make nonsense of the argument of Christ.

VII. We have in Scripture abundant proof that God calls a state of things which has, as yet, no existence, but to which He means to give existence, *as though it had already come into being*. St. Paul lays down this principle when he says that "*God calleth those things that be not, as though they were*."† None but God can do this. But He in whose hands the future is, on whose will what is to be depends, can do this with the same propriety that we can say, "*Such and such things have been or are*." Prophecy, God's Word, is full of such language. Before Christ was born, Isaiah said of Him, "*He is despised and rejected of men*." Before the spiritual Babylon arose to pollute the earth, John recorded the words, "*Babylon is fallen*." So the future eternal life of the redeemed, while it is constantly spoken of as hoped for and coming, is also spoken of as *already bestowed*.‡ Arrogant human pride sometimes copies this language fit only for Godhead. Thus, when the Government of Portugal had given offense to Napoleon Buonaparte, before his soldiers had so much as commenced their march across the Peninsula to carry out his purpose, he issued the decree, "*The House of Braganza has ceased to reign*." And just so with the words of our Lord relative to the patriarchs, who were, if we are to believe Christ, really and truly dead when He spoke. He called them "*living*" in reference to that future eternal life which was theirs on a word and a promise which could not be broken. In God's eyes they were alive, though they were then as unconscious as those rocks of Hebron amid which they slumbered. He called them living because that future time was present to his all-

\* Ex. iii, 6; Matt. xxiii, 32; Luke xx, 38.

† Rom. iv, 17.

‡ Isaiah lili, 9; Rev. xviii, 9; 1 John y, 11.



embracing mind when He would raise them to immortality. God called them not being as though they were.

VIII. The belief in necromancy, existing among the Jews as among other people, is supposed to indicate that the souls of men were alive when they are themselves represented as lying in the grave. Necromancy certainly shows that those who practised it had such an absurd belief, but this by no means establishes the truth of their belief. What there was of reality in such necromancy was probably in most instances the effect of diabolical presence. Scripture, so far from countenancing it in the smallest measure, cuts away the very foundation on which necromancy was supposed to rest, when it says that "the dead know not anything;" and when, with special reference to this very necromancy, it ridicules the whole practice by telling its votaries that the idea on which they based it was vain and illusory. "Should not," says Isaiah, "a people seek unto their God?" And he adds, in mockery, "*for the living to the dead?*"\* Here is a direct contradiction of the popular idea. They whom vulgar fancy had invested with a knowledge beyond that of men living in the flesh are declared to be in that state of death which would render the application of any living man to them for knowledge the act of a madman. And let it be recollected here that the especial reference of Isaiah is *to souls*. The votaries of necromancy said that the body was dead, but that the soul was alive. If Isaiah had merely said then that the body was dead, while the soul was alive, so far from contradicting them, he would have confirmed their opinion. What they claimed to be alive, and all that they claimed to be alive, *was the soul*. When Isaiah then ridicules them as applying to the soul, and affirms that what they applied to was dead, *he affirms the death of the soul*.

IX. The appearance of Samuel at Endor is sometimes thought to establish the life of separate souls.† But in truth it can establish no such thing. Supposing, as we have no doubt was the case, that this appearance was a real one, it by no means follows, as is quietly assumed, that it was the appearance of a separate soul or ghost. We hold it to have been a resurrection of Samuel for a special purpose from his state of death. His appearance and his words best suit this idea. There is no change of any kind in him: such exactly as he had looked in the chamber of sinking age, ere the sleep of death covered his eyelids and stilled the beating [of his heart, such he reappears at Endor. He steps forth for a moment from the intermediate state exactly as he would have stepped forth from that house of Ramah where woman's love watched the old man to see when the shadows of approaching night would steal calmly across the prophet's brow. There is no shaking off the wrinkles of age, no return to the vigour of youth, no putting on of the golden freshness of immortality, such as lightens up the faces and the forms of heaven, in that "old

\* Eccle. ix. 5; Isa. viii. 19.

† 1 Sam. xxviii. 14, 15.



man covered with a mantle," who, in the dimness of the night, rises up out of the ground to the terrified gaze of the woman—the prophet and judge of Israel. And as his appearance, so his words. "*Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?*" Quiet, unbroken rest, such as a toil-worn man takes when he throws himself wearily upon his bed and is oblivious of his toil, is the entire notion that Samuel gives us of his state. We see in his words no idea of activity, of joy, of praise, of glory. All such ideas are absent from his words. We hear no sound of the hymns of Paradise or the occupation of angels. *Rest* is the one idea conveyed by the words of Samuel.

X. The preaching of Christ to the spirits in prison is very often supposed to indicate life in those who are dead, the life of their souls in Hades.\* We are not saying much when we say that we would not accept *any* interpretation of this text which would put it into variance with the declarations of plainer Scriptures. A text which has been bandied about in such various controversies, and claimed in such a variety of meanings by men of learning and honesty, cannot be accepted in controversion of any less equivocal teaching. Texts such as this must receive their interpretation from other Scriptures, not force an interpretation upon them. If we could not put upon it any interpretation satisfactory to others or to ourselves, we should just lay it by until we could find such an interpretation. But to allow it to override the general analogy of Scripture, or to hinder our arriving at a conclusion until we could satisfactorily explain it, is what we never can permit. We candidly allow that we are by no means certain that we know its meaning. It was plain enough to those to whom Peter wrote, but we may have lost the key to it. Of one thing, however, we are perfectly certain, viz., that it does not bear the meaning which has often been attempted to be forced upon it, as representing, namely, a Hades land of living souls, and the soul of Christ, apart from His body, preaching to them there. We have shown Hades to be the grave, the land of death: we have shown that the soul of man is essentially distinct from his spirit: we have seen from Scripture that the spirits of men when they die go not at all to Hades, but return back to their source in the essence of the Godhead. The spirits in prison, then, in Peter's epistle are not spirits of men in Hades, for there are no spirits of men in Hades at all. If the old Protestant interpretation of Christ preaching through the Spirit in Noah to the Antediluvians be rejected, we cannot take in lieu of it the interpretation of our modern Origenists, who would convert Hades into a land of evangelisation.

XI. To us, we must say, the most probable interpretation of this very difficult passage, is that our Lord, when He was Himself raised to life, went to preach or proclaim something, we cannot be absolutely certain what, to some fallen race of angels, who are constantly styled "spirits," probably those "sons of God" whose admixture with men

\* 1 Pet. iii. 18.

in antediluvian times brought about that exceeding wickedness which produced the destruction of the flood.\* This view has been held by some eminent men, and we must confess we incline strongly to adopt it. But we hold ourselves absolutely free from the necessity of giving a satisfactory explanation of this text. Let us say we do not understand it. That prevents us not from saying that, most assuredly, it shall not be brought in controversion of what the concurrent testimony of Scripture has established. It is too dark itself for that. Let it lie by.

XII. It is sometimes said that there are in Scripture, and in especial in the Psalms, passages which speak of the state of death and of Hades in language of hope and joy, and that, consequently, the speaker could not have regarded death as lifeless or joyless, but must have expected, while his body rested in the grave, that his soul would in Hades be alive and happy. We meet such an affirmation with a flat denial. We affirm that there is not a passage in the Psalms, or in any part of Scripture, which speaks of death or Hades with any feeling of satisfaction, save in so far as it is regarded as a relief from intolerable wretchedness.

XIII. We will give our readers the very strongest passages that have been selected by our opponents as indicating that those who uttered them regarded the state of death, or some part of it, at least, with hope and joy. Here is one :

"I have set the Lord always before me;  
Because He is on my right hand I shall not be moved.  
Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth;  
My flesh also shall rest in hope.  
For Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades;  
Neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.  
Thou wilt show me the path of life:  
In Thy presence is fulness of joy,—  
At thy right hand pleasures for evermore."

Here is another :

"As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness:  
I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."

Here is another :

"Like sheep the wicked are laid in Hades;  
Death shall feed on them  
And the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning;  
And their beauty shall consume in Hades from their dwelling.  
But God will redeem my soul from the power of Hades,  
For He shall receive me." †

It is asserted of these passages, that they speak with hope and joy of the believer's anticipated abode in Hades !

XIV. Now, whoever reads these passages with the smallest attention will see that it is *not of the believer's abode in Hades*, but of the

\* Gen. vi. 2; Jude 6; 1 Cor. xi. 10.

† Psalm xvi. 8; xvii. 15; xlix. 14. "The After Life," by Rev. J. Jennings. Essay I.

*believer's deliverance from Hades*, that these passages speak with hope. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades:" "I shall be satisfied when I awake:" "God will redeem my soul from the power of Hades:" it is this which fills the soul of the Psalmist with joy and hope. If he thought he was to remain in Hades he would have despaired. He speaks with delight of deliverance from it, but when he comes to speak of his condition in it he describes it as one of silence, darkness, and death:

"In death there is no remembrance of Thee:  
In Hades who shall give Thee thanks?"

"The dead praise not the Lord,  
Neither any that go down into silence."\*

XV. The magnificent ode of Isaiah, in which he describes the deceased kings of nations taunting the King of Babylon when he descends to take his place among them in Hades, is sometimes advanced in proof that Hades is a land of life.† But this grand composition is expressly said to be a "proverb," or parable, and is, therefore, not to be taken as literally descriptive of the state of things in Hades. The words of the kings and their thrones of state are neither of them real. The whole thing is plainly a poetical image. For the Hades which some dream of as a place of the living is here expressly identified by the prophet with the grave, the place of worms (v. 11). Isaiah supposes them raised from their graves, given life in Hades, in order that he may through them utter the taunt upon Babylon. The whole piece has in this respect a strong resemblance to that parable of our Lord about the rich man and Lazarus, to which, as so sadly abused, we propose to give a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### DIVES AND LAZARUS.

I. THE story of the rich man and Lazarus related to us in the Gospel of St. Luke, cannot be passed over in a few words.‡ It may be said to be almost peculiar in the teaching of Scripture. The grand parable of Isaiah of the Old Kings seated upon thrones in Hades, and there conversing as the greatest of ancient kings came down to take His throne among them, is probably the nearest approach to this parable of Christ that we find in Scripture. In some of its circumstances, indeed, namely, as representing Hades as a place of life, memory, reflection, and speech, it exactly resembles it. Both in the words of Christ and of His great prophet, Hades is identified with the grave, and the dead in Hades are represented as alive and speaking for the purpose of conveying through the words placed in their mouth instruction for the living.

\* Ps. vi. 5; cxv. 17.    † Isai. xiv. 20.    ‡ Luke xvi. 19—31.



II. But it is the position of this parable in the great controversy that is now waging both in respect of the intermediate state and of future punishment that compels us to devote to it our particular attention. The attention of the Church is being now drawn to questions about which, heretofore, there has been little question *within the Church*. Heretofore it was *generally* men of infidel opinions who dared to utter objections to the accepted Christian sentiments upon human nature and future retribution. Splendid exceptions there have been indeed, but this was the rule. *Christian* men, however, are now inquiring whether accepted views of human nature and future punishment are derived from philosophy and tradition, or from Scripture. They are beginning to suspect that a vast amount of current theology has human philosophy for its source. Figures in the field of religious thought, which they used to think figures of Christ, His prophets, and His apostles, they are beginning to suspect are figures of the evil spirit, figures of Plato, and various fathers who derived their theology in a great measure from him. Hence the advocates of the hitherto accepted opinions are sadly perplexed. Driven from various texts which they used to advance without hesitation, taunted by the putting forward of text after text which have hitherto been practically ignored, they fly with a desperate purpose to those few passages in Scripture which may appear to justify their opinions, and among these stands almost pre-eminent the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Poole tells us what it is thought to teach, and in so doing exhibits the reason why so much stress is laid upon it. It is supposed to establish the Platonic doctrine of the soul as the true man, of its capacity for life, joy, and sorrow, apart from the body, and of the commencement of rewards and punishments when man, in death, quits the garment of the body, laid aside as worn out. "The two great points proved by it," says Poole, "are—1. That *the soul is capable of an existence separated from the body*. 2. That the souls of the good, when they depart from their bodies, immediately pass into an eternal state of blessedness."\* Van Oosterzee, in his *Commentary on Luke*, edited by Lange, expresses the same idea more briefly when he says that "this much is evident from it, at the first glance, that *the life, both of the godly and ungodly, is uninterruptedly continued after death*."† Here we see the reason of the great value set upon this parable. Plato's doctrine of *the soul* is supposed to be taught in it. Plato's doctrine of *Death, as identical with Life*, is thought to be here presented to us. Unknown, or rejected in other Scriptures, these Platonic dogmas are here thought to find a countenance. Hence those who will adhere to Plato, cleave with a desperate tenacity to this parable of Dives. If it could be truly shown to teach their views, the only effect would be that of establishing a contradiction between

\* Poole's Comment on Luke xvi. 22.

† Clark's Theological Library xvii. 106.



one part of Scripture and another, or of affording reason to think that this parable of Lazarus, despite the authority of manuscripts, formed no part of the original Gospel of St. Luke.

III. And hence, too, a growing disposition on the part of our Platonic divines to regard this passage of Scripture *not as a parable, but as a history*. Aware that parables are *dark sayings*; aware that parables bear a very close relationship to *fables*, or, rather, are identical; aware that the *story* of the parable is *not always true to reality*; aware that if dead men are made to speak together, and hold rational discourse in this narrative, trees are also made to hold political discourse in another part of Scripture; aware that the parable must receive its interpretation from other Scriptures, and not impose its interpretation upon them, our Platonic theologians, trembling for one of their few remaining props, are growing anxious to change this passage of Scripture from the domain of parable to that of history. They would fain tell us that this is a literal history of what happened to two men apart from the body, existing as two ghosts, feeling ghostly misery or joy in the state that intervened between dying and rising, and discoursing together just as they are represented by our Lord. It is, however, curious that perhaps no single advocate of this view dares to carry it out *throughout*. *Some part of it* they all allow to be *figurative, parabolical*, in other words, *not real*. They nearly all abandon the *talk* between Abraham and Dives as not having really taken place. They, therefore, are fain to consider it *as partly parabolical, partly historical*. If you will only allow so much of it as supports Plato's dogma about the separate existence of souls, they will generously hand over to you the other circumstances to handle as figuratively as you please.

IV. We will not admit of this. It is either a parable, or it is not. If it is a history, it is all of it equally true. If it is a parable, it is all of it subject to the law of the parable. We are free to accept the story in all its parts, just so far and no whit farther than other Scriptures permit us to do so. We are free to accept it as all true, or as having a substantial truth, or as having only a resemblance to truth, exactly as plainer Scriptures point out to us. And we are free to do all this, even though Plato's dogma of the existence of separate souls should suffer damage in this free manipulation. That it is a parable, we believe, in agreement with the all but unanimous opinion of eminent commentators. What Bengel, and Neander, and Olshausen, and De Wette, and Strauss, and Lange, and Trench, and Alford, accept, unhesitatingly, as a parable, almost all of them without thinking it necessary to enter into any proof of it, may be taken as expressing the general sentiment of Christendom that this discourse of Christ is a parable. But as it is by some few Platonists disputed, we will give briefly reasons why it should be taken, as it has always been taken, as a parable. For that this was its general acceptation no one can dispute. "The best commentators," says Bloomfield,

field, "both ancient and modern, with reason consider it as a parable." \*

V. Our Lord's mode of teaching the multitude outside of His disciples was by parables. So invariable was this His method, that Matthew tells us "without a parable spake He not unto them." † It was when He came into the house, or addressed Himself specially to His disciples, that He departed from the habit of the parable. Of course we find language addressed to the multitude which is not parabolical, but this will be found generally, if not invariably, to be merely connective links of His parabolical discourses, or language uttered by Him in answer to arguments and objections uttered against Him by His enemies. Such are the discourses of our Lord in John's Gospel in chapters v. to viii. There is here, however, nothing to call for any departure from His usual method of teaching, while there is everything that can be fairly required to induce us to suppose that He adheres to it. There is just such an occasion in the derision of Him by the covetous Pharisees, which, as on so many other occasions, gives rise to His utterance of a parable (verse 14). It begins in exactly the same manner and words as the two parables which immediately preceded it upon this occasion. "There was a certain rich man," the opening words of this discourse, correspond with "There was a certain rich man" and "A certain man," the opening words of the parables of The Unjust Steward and The Prodigal Son, which go before (xv. 11; xvi. 1). The entire discourse in its form and construction exactly corresponds with the parables of Christ, while it does not thus correspond at all with His didactic discourses not parabolical. Add to this, that there is, perhaps, no commentator on Scripture who ventures to say that *all* the circumstances of this discourse really took place; and we make bold to say that this discourse of Christ must be regarded as a parable, *unless good proof be given to the contrary*. But nothing whatsoever can be adduced in proof of its being not a parable, except that it is wanted in proof of the Platonic doctrine of the separate existence of souls, and the commencement of retribution in the state of death. As we shall see, the parable, even if literally understood, does not teach the existence of separate souls. The one thing in the theory of our opponents, which, thus understood, it would teach, is that retribution commences during the state of death. In teaching that this retribution affects the entire man,—i.e., soul and body,—it goes rather farther than any known commentator has hitherto ventured. *It proves too much*. The discourse supposes the body as much as the soul to be engaged. We proceed, then, on the ground that this discourse is a parable.

VI. Now all who are acquainted with the nature of parables know that what is called *the story of the parable need not be true*. There are some parables of Scripture in which the story is wholly untrue. Trees never engaged in political discourse, nor did the story Nathan

\* Bloomfield's Greek Testament.

† Matt. x'ii. 34.

told to David ever happen in reality.\* The stories here referred to are purely and entirely fictitious, without, in the smallest measure, detracting from their parabolical character and truth. As thus the entire tale may be fictitious, so also may particular parts of it. It is quite plain, therefore, that we may suppose that the story of The Rich Man and Lazarus *was not true as it is here related*, without affecting *that parabolical truth* which can alone be contended for in a parable. Christ relates that Dives was punished in Hades, and that Lazarus was rewarded in Abraham's bosom, *before the resurrection*. This may be contrary to fact. It may be perfectly incorrect to say that either righteous men or wicked men receive any retribution whatsoever, or are capable of it, before resurrection, and yet this parable may be a true and proper parable, and suited perfectly to convey the moral truth it was intended to convey, and which moral truth we hold that our Lord enunciates in the 31st verse, when He says,—“If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”

VII. Now here lies the grand force of the usual theory that, call this discourse what we please, be it history or parable, or admixture of them both, *the moral can only derive any force on the supposition that the story is substantially true*. Perhaps our readers may be surprised when we say that we *cordially and entirely agree with this*. We, too, think and are persuaded that if the moral of this parable be that given in the thirty-first verse, or, indeed, be the moral of it *what it may*, the moral would not and could not have its force if we did not allow the substantial truth of the story upon which it is based and from which it is drawn.

VIII. But our readers must attend honestly to that expression *substantial truth*. Substantial truth, we believe to be all that is contended for here by any commentator, whatever be his opinions. Thus Poole, who agrees fully with the Platonic view of this parable, commenting on verses 25 and 26, says, “We must still remember that all these things are *spoken in a figure*. The great gulf here mentioned, to be fixed between heaven and hell, *is too wide for persons on opposite sides of it to be heard communicating their minds to each other*.” Thus Poole regards this whole conversation between Dives and Abraham to be purely *figurative, imaginary*, i.e., *never to have been spoken at all*. In the judgment of the Platonic commentator Poole, Dives never saw Abraham or Lazarus, and never spoke one word to them either for himself or for his brethren. The dialogue which Christ puts into their lips, and which occupies the greater part of the parable, is as purely mythical as the conversation of the trees when they “went forth on a time to anoint a king over them,” as the old Book of Judges tells us somewhat in honest Æsop's style. Dean Alford, who so far differs from Poole as not to think the “gulf” quite so wide, for instead of placing it between heaven and hell, he adopts

\* Judges ix. 8; 2 Sam. xii. 1.



the more classical idea and supposes it to separate *between different divisions of Hades*, the division for good souls and the division for wicked souls, the Elysian fields and the Tartarus of the Heathen poets, yet concurs with the more old-fashioned commentator in supposing that there is *some figure* in the parable. Commenting upon the phrase, "*Abraham's bosom*," he says that "this, as a form of speech among the Jews, *was not even by themselves understood in its strict literal sense*; and though the purposes of the parable require this, verse 23, *no one would think of pressing it into a truth, but all would see in it the graphic filling-up of a state which itself is strictly actual*."\*

IX. Now our readers must remember this. *No commentator on this parable thinks that every circumstance in it is true*. According to their ideas they suppose this or that circumstance, this or that discourse, to be fictitious. They describe this by a variety of terms which appear milder, such as "a figure," "not literal," "graphic filling up," &c.; but this is what is meant. What is not real is fictitious. And they all allow that some circumstances of this parable are not real, that they never happened, that if we were to insist upon them having really happened we should be insisting on error instead of truth. *Substantial truth with circumstantial error is all they claim for the story of Dives and Lazarus!*

X. *This is exactly what we, too, maintain*. Substantial truth, circumstantial fiction. But our opponents must not be offended if we use the license a little farther than they do. They must not denounce us if we maintain, forced by the testimony of plain Scripture, that there are *other circumstances of this parable fictitious besides those which they hold to be so*. They who hold that Dives never pleaded for himself and his brethren across a gulf and never will do so either, and that Abraham never rejected his eloquent plea, may not think it unreasonable if we suppose that *the time* of this whole occurrence is *antedated* for a purpose, is a figure, a part of that "graphic filling-up" which the object of this parable absolutely demanded. And here is the place for us to give our view of this most interesting and important parable.

XI. *We hold the story to be substantially true*. We do not think that we can be accused of denying its substantial truth when we state that it is true in three great respects, viz., that it teaches us that man's real prosperity is not at all to be judged by his circumstances here; that retribution, according to man's relation to God, awaits every man in a future state of existence; that if a man leaves this present existence unsaved he cannot hope for salvation in that place of pain and punishment to which his neglect of salvation here will justly consign him, for that to pass from that place to the place of bliss is utterly and for ever impossible. Surely, in allowing the story to be true in all these respects, we allow its substantial truth; we

\* Poole and Alford on Luke xvi. 22—25.



allow it to be true quite sufficiently far to bear the moral it was intended to enforce.

XII. And now for our view of what Alford would call its "graphic filling up," and Poole would call its "figure." We agree with Poole in saying that its dialogue between Dives and Lazarus is purely imaginary: not merely that it has not happened, but that it, or conversations of the kind, never will take place between the lost and the saved. And now we will add another circumstance of the graphic filling-up of the parable. *Not only its dialogue, but its time is fictitious.* The dialogue is invented, *the time is antedated.* What will not happen to any man before the period of the resurrection Christ here relates as *happening before the resurrection*, and He consequently paints the lost as *suffering in Hades, the only place throughout the whole Scripture, as Poole tells us, where Hades is understood as the place of torments.*

XIII. This is what we hold at variance with the popular view of this Scripture. We hold that Christ, for the purpose of His parable, antedates it. What will really happen to such men as Dives and Lazarus when they are raised up at the resurrection, He supposes to happen to them in Hades before the resurrection; and He consequently supposes them to be alive in this Hades state, and capable of feeling, speech, &c., exactly as Isaiah raises up his dead kings in Hades to utter a taunt upon Babylon. We cannot be faulted for supposing the circumstance of *time* to be a part of the graphic filling-up of the parable, if we can only justify our doing so from other Scriptures, and the object of the parable in question.

XIV. Our justification we find in abundant passages of Scripture. The receiving of the good things and the evil things which this parable places before resurrection, our Lord has, over and over, in His literal discourses, told us we are not to expect until after the resurrection. In this same series of discourses in which the parable before us occurs He tells his disciples *when they are to expect recompense; it is "at the resurrection of the just."* In His explanation of parable upon parable He has Himself explained that it is not until "the time of the harvest," until "the end of the world" or age, that His people are gathered into His barn and shine as the sun, while the wicked are sent as tares to the burning.\* Over and over He has told us that Gehenna, and not Hades, is the place of torment.† And when He comes to speak of the Lazarus of real life and not the Lazarus of a parable, when He leaves the graphic filling-up of a story, in some of its circumstances purely fictitious, for that historical discourse where perfect truth must be looked for in every phrase, He does not describe the genuine Lazarus as "in Abraham's bosom," but as "sleeping" and "dead."‡ We are, therefore, not merely justified but absolutely required by Scripture to hold that our Lord, in this parable,

\* Luke xiv. 14; Matt. xiii. 50, 40.

† Matt. v. 22; Mark ix. 43.

‡ John xi. 11—14.

antedates it in time, a liberty which the nature and character of parabolical discourse fully entitled Him to do.

XV. All that we can, then, be now called upon to do is to show that such antedating is required here in order to *suit the occasion on which the parable was spoken*. This is very readily shown. It was spoken altogether for the purpose of *influencing the living*. It must, therefore, adapt its time to the parties addressed, and must, therefore, place it before the resurrection, for only before the resurrection is God's appointed time of grace. If it were to fix the time for retribution after resurrection the whole dialogue between Dives and Abraham would be absurd, and the moral drawn from it wholly inapplicable. It is therefore that our Lord was compelled to alter the time of the action of the parable.

XVI. If it is still further objected that our Lord would not utter language that would be generally misunderstood, as His language here has been if the popular interpretation of it be incorrect, we reply that certainly our Lord would not utter language that *ought* to lead men astray, but that to lay down that He would not utter language that *would be* misunderstood is to say the contrary to what He actually has done. His language at the institution of the Eucharist has been very much misunderstood, whether we take the Roman, the Lutheran, or the Protestant view of it.\* That He has spoken here language that would justify misinterpretation we utterly deny. In the first place, the fact that it is a parable, and was addressed to parties to whom the laws of parables were familiar, was a sufficient safeguard. In the next place, His own repeated teaching elsewhere and on every variety of occasion, as to the real place and time of retribution, should have guarded the Church from error on the grand point on which it has generally gone astray. In the next place, it is the Platonic view of the nature of the human soul, introduced in the second century, if not earlier, against the faithful warning of Paul, that has created the tendency to go astray in the interpretation of this parable. Had the scriptural doctrine of the nature of death, and Hades, and the soul, been adhered to, the popular error could not have been fallen into. Abundant safeguard, therefore, has been provided, and if men have gone astray it is their own fault, and not the fault of the language of the parable.

XVII. It only remains for us to say a few words more upon two parts of the parable. The idea that "Abraham's bosom" means a part or division of Hades derives no countenance from this parable. It is expressly stated to be separated from it by a wide gulf. There can be no doubt, we suppose, but that Abraham's bosom is the same as Paradise. On this latter place we will have more to say hereafter, and will not here anticipate it; but we will here merely say that Lazarus reclining in Abraham's bosom points on to the marriage supper of the Lamb, when His people shall eat bread in the kingdom

\* Matt. xxvi. 26—28.

of God.\* The expression points to this glorious time and place, and still further helps to show us that the real period intended is subsequent to resurrection, for certainly it is not until after resurrection that the redeemed eat bread in the kingdom of God.

XVIII. We will now merely say, in conclusion, that the idea that the retribution here spoken of, whether of reward or of punishment, *affects the separate soul only*, derives no countenance whatever, but the very opposite, from this parable. The parable does not speak of *souls* either suffering or enjoying. That is an unfounded inference from the Platonic idea that separate souls are capable of enjoyment or suffering. When this idea was brought into the Church we find the language adapts itself to it. Thus, in the Apocryphal Acts of Thomas, the Apostle is made to say, "I saw *souls hung up*, some by the tongue, some by the hair, some by the hands, some by the feet, head downwards, and smoked with smoke and sulphur."† But this is not the language of the parable, or of any part of Scripture. The only place, so far as we know, where the separate soul is spoken of and personified, and made to speak, is with a connection that evidently shows us that these souls were not possessed of life at all.‡ They are described as "under the altar," and calling on God to "*avenge their blood.*" The expression in Revelation is evidently of one meaning with God's words when He addresses Cain, "What hast thou done? *the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.*"

XIX. Our Lord's words do not give the smallest countenance to the idea that He speaks of *souls apart from bodies*. Platonic commentators are sure to bring this idea in, but it is their Platonic dogma that makes them do so. Thus Bengel, commenting on Lazarus' being carried by the angels, says that "He means *his soul*;" and Oosterzee's comment on "carried by the angels," is—"evidently, *his soul.*" But, if we are to take our Lord's words, the very contrary would evidently appear to have been his meaning. Even in the graphic filling-up of a parable, He who once said to His disciples, "*Handle Me, and see that it is I Myself,*" will not countenance the childish, heathen notion of ghost-lands, ghost-joys, and ghost-pains. His words, speaking of the rich man, are—"The rich man also died and was buried. And in Hades *he* lifted up his eyes, being in torments." It is *the same man* who was buried that in Hades was in torment. Christ, true to the Scriptural account of man, represents man made of dust as the person who suffers. He does not draw His ideas from heathen sources, but from the analogy of Scripture. He does not go to Plato for the filling up of His parabolical pictures. Isaiah had afforded Him the model—if He wanted such—when the prophet describes the dead monarchs rising from their graves in Hades to utter the triumphant taunt upon Babylon. The Lazarus who was borne by the angels was a man, not a ghost: and so was the rich

\* Luke xiv. 14, 15.

† *The Apocryphal Gospels.* T. T. Clarke. P. 420.  
‡ Rev. vi. 9; Gen. iv. 10.



man who lifted up his eyes in Hades. Platonism finds no countenance even in the graphic filling-up of a parable.

XX. We have now gone through the objections that may be urged against our view of Hades from the Old Testament, and have no hesitation in saying that they are of no weight whatever against the overwhelming evidence that establishes our view. We affirm that every passage in the Old Testament which speaks hopefully and joyfully of an after life *does so in connection with the resurrection*. We affirm that every passage in the Old Testament which speaks of *the state of death—i.e., of the entire period between our dying and our rising*—states it to be a condition of silence, darkness, unconsciousness, and death. Against some improbable inferences we place the numerous and plain declarations of the Old Testament. Among them are the following: “The dead know not anything:” “The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence:” “That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they all have one breath (or spirit); so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast:” “There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Hades, whither thou goest:” “In death, there is no remembrance of Thee; in Hades, who will give Thee thanks?” “Hades cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee.”\* With these passages before us, we see what the Old Testament taught positively of the entire state of death, of Hades and the grave, of the body and of the soul. The Old Testament is full, clear, and authoritative upon this fundamental point. It does not, indeed, exhibit the *eternal life* which Christ came to give in the bright light in which the Gospel does. But of the state of death the Old Testament speaks more fully than the New, and without the smallest hesitation or obscurity in its utterances. If it was reserved for the Gospel to bring life and immortality to light, it was given, and with equal propriety, to the Old to exhibit the gloom of that state from which Christ will deliver his people for ever. It is, according to the Old Testament, a state of darkness, silence, unconsciousness, and death, *from which* the faith of the saints in the old dispensation hoped for deliverance, and hailed the day of Christ which shone in the distance, and spoke of bringing the body from the grave and the soul from Hades in the morning of the resurrection.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE PENITENT THIEF.

I. HAVING shown that the objections against our theory, from a few passages of the Old Testament, have no weight, we now proceed

\* Eccl. ix. 5; iii. 19; ix. 10. Ps. vi. 4, 5; cxv. 17. Is. xxxviii. 18.



to consider those which are brought forward from the New. It would indeed be a serious matter if they could be established. One part of God's Word would then be arrayed against another. The best result that could be hoped for in a case of the kind would be the rejection of those few passages from the text of Scripture which spoke in contradiction of its general tone and teaching.

II. We are not, however, reduced to this sad necessity. Examination of those passages of the New Testament which are so often paraded in opposition to us will, we are satisfied, result in the conviction that they are, one and all, readily and naturally reconcilable with it. They are in number *very few*. Some four or five passages are, we believe, all that have any show of opposition to our view. We proceed to consider them in the order in which they occur in the New Testament.

III. One of the texts which is most confidently brought forward in proof that the soul of man does not die when the body dies is our Lord's declaration to His disciples, addressed to them to guard them in the prospect of martyrdom, "Fear not them which kill the body, and are *not able to kill the soul.*"\* It is from hence argued, even by those who believe in the ultimate destruction of the body and soul of the wicked in hell, that *in the intermediate state the soul survives death.*

IV. We have not the slightest hesitation in saying that this view would derive very strong confirmation from this text, if this text stood alone in Scripture. We do not hesitate to say that if there were no other texts of Scripture which spoke upon this question, the view above held is what would most naturally be held, and the view which we would ourselves hold. This one text, we frankly avow, long kept us to a view of the intermediate state which we now see to be untenable—viz., the sleep of the soul, supposed to be still alive, in a Hades distinct from the grave. But we know that the most obvious view of a particular passage of Scripture, or of any book, though generally, is not always the real sense. A less obvious sense may be the one we are compelled to take from respect to other passages of the same book, which compel us to abandon the more obvious for the less obvious sense, unless we hold that the writer contradicts himself. A supposition of this kind, which we are very slow to admit in the case of a human author of good sense and judgment, is wholly inadmissible in the case of a book supposed to be inspired. Here we choose, when compelled, the less obvious sense, sensible that it must be the intended sense. The sense we would attach to our Lord's words, when He says that man can kill the body, but cannot kill the soul, is that although that soul, or life, be actually dead and lost for the time, yet that in God's eye and mind it is living, as reserved and destined by Him for a future and an eternal existence. This sense we allow to be less obvious than the

\* Matt. x. 28.

former or Platonic sense, but we maintain it to be a sense fully justified by the language of Scripture elsewhere, and absolutely required by its general doctrine upon this subject.

V. That Scripture elsewhere justifies this use of the language of our Lord we will show by reference to two passages both of a kindred nature, and one of them identical in expression. That there is a life during the intermediate state which is not possessed but pledged is quite certain from those words of Christ addressed to the Sadducees: "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him," or "live in Him," as we prefer. There is a mine of thought and truth in these words which has never been properly worked out from the prevalence of Platonic ideas. As an heritage entailed belongs not only to the actual possessor of it, but also to his heirs yet unborn, so now we see of the believer's life. It matters not now whether from these words we suppose, with many, that they prove an actual life at the time when they were spoken for the old patriarchs. They certainly, if we will take our Lord's explanation of them, indicate *the life of resurrection* which was not then possessed. Poole's comment is so excellent that we gladly use it as the testimony of an opponent; he says, "Though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead at the speaking of those words, yet they were not so in God's eye, who was determined to raise them up in the last day, and who with the same eye beholds things past, present, and to come."\* In this Scripture, then, our Lord lays down the principle that life is said to belong to persons who have it not, but to whom it is pledged by God.

VI. The same principle is elsewhere declared by our Lord in these words: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that *hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.*"† The words here used by Christ are especially valuable as bearing upon Matt. x. 28, for it is of *the psyche, the soul*, translated "life," that Christ is speaking. We have a perfect right to use "soul" here for "life," and to translate thus—"He that loveth his soul shall lose it; and he that hateth his soul in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." Now our Lord here teaches us that the man who, for His sake, *here loses his soul really preserves it for eternity.* Here the soul or life of the martyr, that same *psyche* which Christ, in Matt. x. 28, says that man cannot destroy, is represented as actually, for the time, lost or destroyed, while, in reference to its eternal safety, it is looked on as most carefully guarded and preserved. This text throws a full light upon Matt. x. 28. Christ cannot mean to tell us in this latter text that that cannot happen to the soul which in the former text He tells us can and does happen. Man can, and does, destroy or kill the soul of the believer, *but,—it is a momentary death.* What he has for the time extinguished is reserved by God to shine throughout eternity. It is not, therefore, in God's eye and mind lost, destroyed, or perished. As a writer, with whom on some important points we agree, while we

\* Poole's Comment. on Luke xx. 38.

† John xii. 25.

differ from him wholly upon others, has most clearly and beautifully written, "When men kill the saints, they only terminate their mortal existence. They do not touch that real life of theirs which is related to the eternal future, and which has its foundation in their connection with Christ in the heavens. This is in Christ's keeping, and can be touched by no man. We are not to fear those who can only demolish the corruptible body, and cannot do anything to prevent the coming bestowal of immortality by resurrection."\*

VII. We now come to a passage very much relied on, as proving that the intermediate state between death and resurrection is, for the people of Christ, one of life and joy.† Christ hangs upon the cross. It is towards the close of that Jewish day which ended about six o'clock p.m. Of the thieves who hung by His side, one was a believer in Christ and His coming kingdom. Confessing his sins and his punishment as well-merited, he turns to Him who had ever invited sinners to come to Him, and in humble hope and faith asks to be remembered by his King when his King should come into, or rather in, His kingdom. His "Lord, remember me, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom," is met with the ready answer, "Verily, I say unto thee, to-day, or, this day, thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

VIII. From our Lord's reply three things are generally supposed. First, that by "to-day" is meant that very Jewish day of twenty-four hours which was shortly about to expire, and that the entire period of time here spoken of, during which the thief should be with Christ in Paradise, was that period of three solar days during which Christ lay in the grave. Secondly, it is supposed that by Paradise Christ meant a part of Hades,—that part, namely, where it is supposed that the souls of the righteous went separate from the body. Thirdly, it is supposed that this part of Hades must have been the scene of life and joy. And from all this, it is concluded that the souls of believers, during the intermediate state, are in a condition of life and joy, and not of unconsciousness and death.

IX. 'It may seem a cruel thing to throw down so fair-seeming an argument for the Platonic Elysium, but we are bound in honesty to say that the above ingenious argument, at its very best, is only a rope of sand. *Supposing the perfect correctness of the two first suppositions, they would not weigh one feather against our argument.* Supposing that our Lord did mean that portion of three natural days during which He lay in the grave; supposing that He meant by Paradise a part of Hades; why, in that case, nothing more could be proved from His words, but that, *during that short period of time, He and the thief would be together in whatever condition the righteous were in Hades.* For, it must be remarked, Christ does not say one word of what the condition of which He speaks would be. He does not say it would be one of life or of joy. He does not say that it is souls separate from bodies that would go there. None of these three

\* "Twelve Lectures," by Robert Roberts. Fifth Edition, p. 64. † Luke xxiii. 43



things are said by Him at all. All these things must be proved from some other source. It must from another source be established that souls separate from bodies are alive. It must be established that the Paradise which is part of Hades, if there be such a place at all, is the scene of life. If it be in Hades, it is only natural to suppose that it shares in the general character of Hades. But from the words of Christ, supposing Him to speak of a part of Hades, and of the three days during which He was in Hades, it could only be inferred that Christ, in reply to the prayer of His disciple to be remembered when He came in His kingdom, promised him that for a part of three days he should be with Himself in whatever condition the righteous were in Hades. This we have established from Scripture to be a condition of lifelessness. Whether such an answer to one of the highest acts of faith that was ever performed would be a suitable one, we leave to our opponents. It is all that the words, granting them their own view of them, can bear. We think it a lame conclusion. We do not think our King so niggard in His reply to His people's suit. But not one whit more will His words bear, supposing Him to mean by Paradise, Hades, and by the time, the three days of His lying in the grave.

X. And now we will present our view of our Lord's reply to the thief. It has this great recommendation, that *it is a direct answer to, and granting of, the prayer*. The thief asks to be remembered, thought of, not absolutely forgotten, when the great King should come in His kingdom. The meek and gentle King replies that at the time of which His disciple spoke, on the day when He should come in His kingdom, he should indeed be remembered; for on this very day, that poor man, man's outlaw and scoffing, should be *side by side* with the King of the Eternal Age in Paradise, His kingdom. Christ grants his prayer, and more than grants it. He does not mock his soaring, far-reaching prayer with the promise of a place near Himself in that Hades to which He only could endure to go, because He knew He would be delivered from it! He tells him that, amid all the grandeur of that day of the Lord of which he spoke, when the angels of heaven accompanied the Son of God, when the saints of all times thronged around, he who hung side by side with the Crucified One, who was not ashamed of Him of whom His very apostles were ashamed, who trusted in One in whom His nearest disciples had almost ceased to trust, who recognised in the outcast, anguished, frame-worn, and heart-broken Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Coming Age, should once more be with Him, side by side, but no longer in shame, but in glory. We think such a reply worthy of the occasion. We will show that no other reply is admissible.

XI. And in the first place we assert that Paradise is not Hades, nor any part of Hades, and that consequently our Lord could not have spoken of that time and of that place during which, and in which, He lay in the grave. Paradise is spoken of in but three places.



The first of these is the passage of which we are now treating. The other two places absolutely forbid us to suppose that Paradise is a part of Hades. The first of these is the place in which Paul, speaking of his vision or visions, tells us that he "*was caught up into Paradise.*"\* Certainly the place to which Paul was caught up was no part of that Hades which is in the heart of the earth. The second place is found among our Lord's messages to the Churches of Asia, where He promises that "to him that overcometh, He will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."† The time of which our Lord here speaks is subsequent to the resurrection, for it is then that we read of the tree of life restored to man, and partaken of by him.‡ No one dreams of the tree of life as growing in Hades, the realm of death. It is when Christ comes in His kingdom, raises His dead, and gives them their eternal place,—it is then they dwell in Paradise. But this is the very time of which the thief spoke—"When Thou comest in Thy kingdom." The Paradise promised to him by Christ is the Paradise of the Book of Revelation.

XII. But while it is not attempted to be denied that the Paradise of which Paul spoke and of which John spoke is not in Hades, our opponents try to extricate themselves from their difficulty by supposing that there are *two Paradises*! We regret to say that such a man as Alford lends his name to this wretched subterfuge. He supposes one Paradise to be that of which Paul and John spoke, and another to be that Paradise of which our Lord spoke to the thief *in condescension to Rabbinical ideas*! His words are—"Paradise became, *in the Jewish theology*, the name for that *part of Hades* where the souls of the righteous await the resurrection. It was *also* the name for a supernal or heavenly abode (see 2 Co. xii. 4; Rev. ii. 7). The former of them is, I believe, here primarily to be understood."§

XIII. Against this principle of interpretation we absolutely protest. Scripture is to be interpreted by its own analogy. Scripture speaks of but one Paradise, and that not in Hades. The passage in Luke does not give us the smallest ground for supposing that it speaks of any other Paradise than the Scriptural one. It rather intimates the very contrary. In the Greek the article occurs before Paradise—"thou shalt be with me in *the* Paradise," *i.e.* the true and real one to which faith looks forward as the consummation of its expectations, not some mythical, Rabbinical, shadowy, flimsy, Paradise, such as some heathens and some Jews who borrowed their ideas from heathens, imagined in the ghost-land of Hades.

XIV. But it is said that Jewish theology was so unanimous upon this point that Paradise was a part of Hades, that we cannot reject its aid towards the interpretation of Scripture. It is asserted that so general was the Rabbinical teaching upon this, so indoctrinated was the popular mind with this idea of a Paradisaical Hades, that even the

\* 2 Cor. xii. 4.

† Rev. xxii. 2.

‡ Rev. ii. 7.

§ Alford on Luke xxiii. 43.

mind of the thief upon the cross, whatever may have been the defects of his education or the wild career of his life, was so thoroughly imbued with it that the mention of Paradise would, as a matter of course, suggest the idea of Hades, would of necessity draw him away from that distant vision of Christ coming in His kingdom, on which he foolishly thought, to that nearer time of bliss which should come to him in that Hades of which Job, and David, and Hezekiah, yea, and Christ Himself could think of only with a shudder! In fact, so full of Jewish opinion are our opponents upon this question, that they suppose the well-educated thief would have been sorely perplexed if Christ, in speaking of Paradise, meant any other place than Hades! We will, therefore, say a word or two upon this point.

How is this Jewish unanimity of thought *before the crucifixion* known to have existed? We deny it, and ask for proof. The Septuagint uses *Paradise for the Garden of Eden* (Gen. ii. 15), but we do not suppose that this gives much countenance to a Paradise of Hades.

XV. But perhaps it may be said that *opinion subsequent to the crucifixion* is so strong and so unanimous that Paradise was a part of Hades, that it proves that opinion before the crucifixion was of the same strong and uniform kind. Well, we meet this by saying that this is not by any means the case. It is not now agreed, and never has been agreed, that any part of Hades is Paradise; and for the opinion of some that it is, we can give as a reason for their opinion the Platonic dogma of the soul.

XVI. It is true there are, and have been from very early times of the Christian era, men, Jewish and Christian, who have held this view. Dean Alford in our own time, the vigorous mind of Horsley in the century gone by, various earlier writers of whom Usher and others make mention, the learned Usher himself—if, indeed, we may quote him for this view, when he says, that there is *a part of Hades in heaven itself*, these, many in number and respectable in authority, may be quoted as holding the unscriptural theory that Paradise lay within Hades, the realm of the dead.\* But to say that opinion since the crucifixion is unanimous in thinking that Paradise lay within Hades is to state what is contrary to fact. While we can account for the opinions of many in favour of that view from the prevalence of the Platonic theory of the soul, we assert that opinion, at the time when it is most to be valued—viz., in the earlier periods of the Church, rejected as a rule the absurd idea that Paradise was in Hades. Tertullian, in a passage which exhibits the creeping in of error into the ideas on the intermediate state, yet expressly states that the general doctrine of his time clearly distinguished Paradise from Hades. "No one," he says, "on becoming absent from the body, is at once a dweller in the presence of the Lord, except by the

\* Alford on Luke xxiii. 43; Horsley's Sermon on 1 Pet. iii. 18; Usher, Answer, Ch. viii.

prerogative of martyrdom, whereby the saints get at once a lodging in *Paradise*, not in *Hades*.”\*

XVII. The Vulgate translation of the Bible, which may be said to express the sentiment of the Western Church from the fourth century, rejects the idea that Paradise was in Hades, for in its version of Ecclesiasticus xliv. 16, where the Greek simply speaks of the translation of Enoch as it is recorded in Genesis, the Vulgate says that “*he was translated into Paradise*.”† No one supposes that Enoch was placed in Hades. The Roman Church from the sixteenth century to the present day, in one of her authorised formularies, identifies Paradise with the kingdom of heaven and the New Jerusalem which are to succeed the resurrection. “Very many other names,” we are told, in her catechism for parish priests, “are given in Scripture to this heavenly bliss, of which kind are, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of Heaven, *Paradise*, the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, the House of our Father.”‡ What we have seen to have been the opinion of the more orthodox part of the early Church, was the opinion also even of those heretical writers of the earlier centuries, whose productions have been handed down to us under the sounding titles of “The Gospel of Thomas,” “The Gospel of Nicodemus,” “The Acts of the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul,” “The Revelation of Moses,” “The Revelation of Paul,” “The Passing of Mary,” &c. They deny that Paradise is part of Hades: they claim it to be the place of glory, the third heaven, not to be revealed until after resurrection, in which no one has yet been able to live.§ The opinion, then, of the early Church was adverse to the idea that Paradise was a part of Hades, and we cannot therefore suppose our Lord to have been induced by an opinion which had no prevalence, to give to the Hades to which He and His disciples were going the unscriptural name of Paradise.

XVIII. It may be, however, that some of our opponents may now turn round, and, insisting on the true and Scriptural sense of Paradise, say that Christ promised His disciple that on that very day, ere the setting of the sun, he should be with Himself in his Father’s house at God’s right hand. No doubt the words of Christ, taken by themselves, will bear that sense. Unfortunately, however, for our Platonic theorists, other Scriptures preclude the possibility of this interpretation. Our Lord, body and soul, was, from the time He died to the time He rose, in Hades, and the grave. If any one will imagine the “spirit” which He commended in death into His Father’s hand to have been Christ, He corrects this idea by telling us that as surely and as truly as the prophet Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so was the Son of Man

\* Tertullian’s “Resurrection of the Flesh,” ch. xliii.

† Eccius. xliv. 16. Vulgate.

‡ Catechismus, Ad Parochos, Pars I, Art. xii. v.

§ Apocryphal Gospels. Ante-Nicene Christian Library, pp. 241, 310, 357, 465, 502.



three days in the heart of the earth. Even after His resurrection, and before His ascension, He has taught us that He did not ascend unto His Father.\* The idea that Christ was not in the heart of the earth, in body and soul, we must, then, abandon, unless we choose, from a preference of Plato's fancies, to reject Christ's words.

XIX. But our opponents are not quite done with this text. They boldly tell us that whatever or wherever Paradise may be, and whatsoever Hades may be, that yet, beyond a doubt, Christ and His penitent were in Paradise on that very Jewish day which was so soon to close, when the sun of that great day had set behind the hills. They say that this cannot be questioned, because Christ said, "*To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.*" On that very day, then, they say Christ and His disciple went to Paradise, and in that Paradise the penitent has been for more than eighteen hundred years.

XX. If it were necessary to alter the punctuation of this passage, in order to avoid the force of this argument, we should not have the smallest hesitation in doing so. We should not hesitate to alter a comma from the place where a human transcriber thought fit to place it, in order to avoid the contradiction of a doctrine which God has revealed. It is well known that the punctuation of the New Testament is the work of the men who transcribed the manuscripts, not the work of the Evangelists and Apostles. We know of no law of the Greek language which would *prevent* our placing the comma after, instead of before "*to-day,*" and reading our Lord as saying, "*Verily I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.*" If it were required to avoid a contradiction of God's Word, we should adopt it without a moment's hesitation.

XXI. But we freely allow that so far as our acquaintance with the genius of the Greek language goes, we agree with the great body of scholars who prefer the punctuation as it is, though we wholly dissent from those of them who say that the above alteration of punctuation is inconsistent with the laws of the language, and still more that it would present a sense inconsistent with the occasion. But we see no necessity whatever for any change of punctuation. We will merely alter the translation from "*to-day,*" to "*on this day,*" and read our Lord as saying, "*Verily I say unto thee, on this day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.*"

XXII. That the Greek word translated "*to-day*" may also with equal propriety be translated "*on this day,*" cannot be disputed. We will merely give the explanation of it by two eminent lexicographers, neither of whom agreed with us in our view of this passage or in our general theory. Rose's *Parkhurst* thus gives it: "*σήμερον*, or according to the Attic dialect, *τήμερον*, adv., *q. d.* *τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ταύτῃ*, or *τῇδε τῇ ἡμέρᾳ*, *on this day—to-day, this day.*" And in agreement with this we read in Schleusner's *Lexicon of the New Testament*, "*σήμερον*, in the Attic *τήμερον*, is properly used as an adverb to sig-

\* Acts ii. 27; Luke xxiii. 46; Matt. xii. 40; John xx. 17.



nify *this day*, and is equivalent to *τῇδε ἡμέρα, on this day.*" With this translation we address ourselves to the text.

XXIII. "On this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Have we any clue to discover what day our Lord meant by "*this day*?" Most assuredly it might signify the very Jewish day on which He was speaking, but most assuredly also it might signify some other day, if some other day were then spoken of between Him and His disciple. Now the penitent in his prayer *was speaking of another day.* He was speaking of the *day of Christ's appearing* when he said, "Lord, remember me *when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.*" And it is only most natural, most proper, most suitable to the occasion, that our Lord should refer in His reply to the day which His disciple spoke of in his prayer. Thus naturally interpreted, "On this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise" means "On this day of which you speak, when I come in My kingdom, thou shalt be with Me as now thou art—side by side." And so vanishes this text from the few that are objected with any show of plausibility against us.

XXIV. And yet it may well be that our blessed Lord, in His knowledge of the reality of the intermediate state as one of sleep, brings in the idea of that very Jewish day in connection with the day of His appearing as being both of them *synchronical.* *There are two occasions when time ceases to be.* One of these is when *eternal life commences.* John spoke of this when he said, "there should be time no longer."\* Time is a measure, a portion of something. That of which time can be affirmed must therefore be capable of measurement, *be finite.* Eternity, therefore, has no years, no time. He who dwells in eternity is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever—a thousand years are to Him as one day. The other occasion when time is abolished is *when death has come.* To the sleeper in death's arms there is no time as there is none to him who has entered on the limitless ocean of eternity. The penitent on the cross had come to the brink of the river of death when time should cease for him. That sun that had shone out again upon him when the darkness had passed could not sink until he had ceased to live. He lived not to the end of that Jewish day. He departed ere its hours were spent to the region where time is not, the land where all things are forgotten, where there is no hoping, no waiting, where myriads of years are the same as moments of time. When the centuries are passed away that sleeper will awake. He will take up time where he left off time, under the blaze of a Syrian sky, in pain and weakness, with other sufferers by his side, and jests and mockeries in his ear. *That day has not yet passed for him.* The sun has stayed its course in the sky *for him.* The hand upon the dial still points to the minute and the second at which it pointed when he fell asleep, some half-hour to six o'clock p.m., on such a day of a Jewish month in the year of our Lord Thirty-three. The last half-hour of that old Jewish day the penitent

\* Rev. x. 6.

thief will spend with his King in His kingdom, for it is there he takes up the thread of time once more, only to merge it in the infinitude of eternity.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### PAUL'S DESIRE TO DEPART.

I. THERE are, that we know of, but two more passages in the New Testament which are apparently opposed to our view. They are both of them passages from the writings of St. Paul, where he speaks in contrast of his present life, and of that to which he looked forward. They are both very often supposed to express his expectation that during that state of death which preceded his resurrection, he, *i.e.*, his soul separate from the body, should enjoy a life of conscious joy. We will examine both these passages at some length.

II. We first come to consider 2 Cor. v. 1—9, which will upon examination be seen, we think, to be conformable in its teaching with our view, and in fact to lend it no small support.\* In the first verse Paul contemplates *Death*. He describes it as the dissolution of this our "earthly house." We doubt very much if he speaks here *only of the body*. We think he speaks of our *entire present being*, which is not body only, but body animated by its soul. Of this entire being death is the dissolution. Paul does not here tell us what are the consequences of death to any part of our present being, for this we are to gather from other Scriptures and from experience of death. He here then contemplates *the state of death*, and contrasts it with *another state* for which he earnestly longs, and which, in contrast with this existence, called from its transitoriness "a tabernacle," he calls "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."†

III. Our first inquiry, and one which, we imagine, will be our clue to this whole passage, and, perhaps, also to Phil. i. 23, is what is meant by that *state of death* which the Apostle calls the dissolution of this earthly house. Calvin and most of our theologians suppose it to consist in a *momentary act*,—*the departure of the soul from the body*. This, we think, is one of the gravest errors that it is possible to fall into upon this important question. That which Calvin supposes to be at once the commencement and the end of death is, in Scripture, and plainly in reason, *only* its beginning. The state of death lasts from the moment that a man dies, to the moment that he wakes up at the resurrection. The state of death is not a point of time like the twinkling of an eye, but embraces all the period during which the body lies in the grave, and the soul remains in Hades. This is the teaching of Scripture, and, in especial, it is the teaching of 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55. The reign of death remains unbroken during

\* 2 Cor. v. 1—9.

† Bengel on 2 Cor. v. 2.

the entire of this period, and this is the period which he speaks of *during which* "our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved." This is a most important point, and one which Scripture places beyond any fair dispute. So far from contemplating here *the moment when man dies*, Paul contemplates and speaks of *all the time that he is dead*. The act of dying, so far from being the termination of death, is only *the entrance of death upon his dominion*. Our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, and continues in its dissolution until the Lord wakes us up from sleep.

IV. This point being established, sets us at once free from a variety of perplexities such as may be seen when we read the comments of the clear-headed Calvin upon this place. We now see that Paul does not contemplate, as the contrast with the dissolution of the earthly house, *any state* of the believer before resurrection, for the believer is, up to the resurrection, in the state of dissolution. Paul does not contrast the act of dying and separation from the body with the condition of the believer's soul in Hades or anywhere else. *The whole intermediate state* is embraced in the idea of the dissolution of this earthly house. What Paul, then, contrasts here with *Death* is, and can only be, the *Eternal Resurrection* state. He contrasts this, our present life, daily verging towards dissolution, and after a few years dissolving, and remaining in this state of dissolution until the resurrection, with the glorious life which shall commence when Christ raises His people, and shall continue for ever. This is "the building of God, the house not made with hands, *eternal in the heavens*."

V. If indeed the general view of Scripture did not lead us to this idea, the very terms here used in description of that which Paul contrasts with the earthly house, would establish it. On no idea could the intermediate state be said to be "*eternal in the heavens*." We have seen that the soul of the believer does *not* go to heaven upon death, an idea regarded as heresy by the Early Church.\* But, at all events, the intermediate state, wherever supposed to be, is a temporary one—one for the termination of which we long and pray—and therefore cannot be thought to be that "house eternal in the heavens" which shall never terminate, and which we should never wish to terminate. We have, then, in the outset, these two things established: first, that state of death which Paul contemplates as coming is that state which embraces the entire intermediate state of soul and body; secondly, that state which he contrasts with it is the state which commences when Hades is past and gone, when the Lord comes and raises His people from the grave.

The second verse brings before us Paul's feelings when he contemplated the glorious eternal state. We need not dwell upon this. It is enough to say that he earnestly *longed for the time when he should enjoy it*. Now this is *not* his longing to die. Calvin and others say *it is*. The Bible and Paul tell us *it is not*. What Paul longed for

\* Justin Martyr, Trypho, ch. lxxx.; Irenæus, Heresies, B. V. ch. xxxi.



was the resurrection state. In a life made sad through the hatreds of men and the infirmity of his flesh, he longed, with all the longing of his mind, for the resurrection-state. He passes in this verse over the whole intermediate state. His mind dwells not there. There was nothing there to make him pause. He sends his mind's eye across its gloomy region to its end. His longing fixes itself upon the state which only begins when the intermediate state is altogether vanished like a dream.

VI. The third verse presents some difficulty. The difficulty turns upon what Paul means by "*naked*." Many commentators suppose that he here introduces no new idea, but that his nakedness is what he mentions in the first verse as the dissolution of this earthly house, and in the fourth verse as being "*unclothed*."\* Calvin and others, however, suppose that a new idea is called in, and that here the justification of the believer by Christ's righteousness, suggested by the context, is introduced. We are not at all inclined to agree with Calvin. We think that if expressions of a similar sense, with an ordinary meaning for "*naked*" be met with in the immediate context, which no doubt is the case, and if the taking of "*naked*" in the sense of those passages makes good sense in the verse where it occurs, which we think it does, it is unreasonable and unjustifiable to suppose it to be taken in any different sense when Paul does not give us the smallest hint that he meant to introduce a new idea.

Our view, then, of this verse is simply this. Paul in the previous verse expresses his longing for the heavenly house, "*since*" being thus clothed we shall not be found any longer in the naked state to which death leads the believer as well as other men. If this be Paul's meaning, and we really do not well see how any other can be adopted, it lets in a full light upon the ideas which Paul entertained of the intermediate state. It was a state of nakedness, an unclothed state. Now it is *only* of the intermediate state that he says this. It is not *of this life*, far less of the glorified future life, that he speaks. It is of that intermediate state of which Calvin and our modern theologians speak in terms which can scarce be exceeded by those in which the Scriptures speak of the glorified state of the resurrection. In the glorified state we shall have our eternal house and home. But Hades is not our home. It is a state of nakedness. It is a state which calls to mind the many destitutions of earth. The stranger and the prisoner are classed with the "*naked*" (James ii. 15; Matt. xxv. 36). It is not a condition which Paul looked for or liked. He would not have echoed Calvin's words when the Genevese Reformer called on believers to lift up their heads at the approach of death as the time of their redemption. Paul would tell us to look beyond its nakedness to the land of life, of the fresh breezes of heaven, of light and joy and busy blessed occupation. Hades is naked, reft of all such things as these.

VII. In the fourth verse, Paul carries out still further the ideas

\* Bengel, 2 Cor. v. 3.



already presented. "We that are in this tabernacle," he says, "do groan, being burdened." Such is our present mortal state. The world without, and Satan, and our sins, and our temptations, make this state, brief and transitory, also one of painful burden. Yet all our groaning cannot make us thoroughly to desire "to be unclothed:" "*Not that we would be unclothed!*" We groan, and we long because we groan, but for what? Not for the unclothed Hades state.\* We cannot wish to be unclothed and naked. It is an impossibility to nature. But we groan for the future clothed state of the heavenly house, eternal in duration, the glorified body and spirit reunited, even as the poor man would change his hut, through whose many crevices the winds and the rains of winter penetrate, for one that would shelter and warm him. That which the Christian here burdened desires, is not death, is not Hades, is not the intermediate state; it is that mortality may be swallowed up of life. That is not Hades. Hades is the swallowing up of mortality in death. Hades is the triumph of death. Life here is death threatened and coming: Hades is death inflicted and come. But we wish that that which is mortal and must die may be swallowed up and lost in that new life which shall never end. We wish the Hades state to be past and gone—a thing obliterated and annihilated—and the life of the resurrection introduced. Hades will be obliterated. We long for it; pray for it with every breath of prayer that breathes after life.

VIII. "He that hath wrought us for that self-same thing"—this eternal house—"is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest"—the sure pledge—"of the Spirit," or, as Paul said elsewhere, "if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you. He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."† In consequence of having this pledge and earnest of the glorious eternal house, Paul says, "we are *always* confident," always full of good hope in whatever circumstances we may happen to be, confident although we know that so long as we are "at home in the body," while yet our "earthly house of this tabernacle" is not dissolved, "we are absent from the Lord." Here, in this life, we are not sensibly personally present with Christ: He is absent from us, far off in heaven, where we see Him not. Yet even thus we are of good courage, since we have in us the Spirit, the earnest of our future.

IX. For this present life is one of faith, not of sight; very different from that future life where we shall see and know—"we walk by faith, not by sight," as yet.

But if we are thus confident, even in this present life with all its infirmities and drawbacks, much more have we a good courage and satisfaction to part wholly and for ever from our present vile body of corruption, to bid farewell to our earthly house of this tabernacle, and to enter upon that glorious eternal future, to obtain the house

\* See Bengel.

† Rom. viii. 11.

not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, which shall be ours when our resurrection ushers us into the presence of Christ, to see Him with our eyes, and to be ever present with Him. This, we have no doubt, is the "presence with the Lord," which Paul here speaks of, and not the intermediate state as Calvin and others dream. For Paul had but just expressed himself that this unclothed condition was *not* his desire or wish. He could not, with any consistency with his just-uttered declaration, say that he should view it with a good satisfaction.

X. But, it will be objected, does not Paul pass on from absence from the body to presence with the Lord with a bound, as though between these there was *no intervening state*? Does he not here speak as though one followed another instantaneously, just as we see the lightning flashing from the cloud, and straightway hear the deep thunder crash? Undoubtedly he does. And then it will be said, How does this agree with your view of an intermediate state, a Hades for souls which has received and detained some for six thousand years, in which the soul of Paul has been detained some nineteen hundred years, which may, for ought we can tell, last in its full dominion for centuries to come? How can you place this condition between absence from the body and presence with the Lord, if the latter *follows* the former instantaneously?

XI. We reply that *the nature* of this intervening state of Hades answers the objection: *It is a sleep*. It is a nonentity. It has no perceptible time. A moment here seems longer than its six thousand years to the sleepers. And we answer still further that this is Paul's own view of it. The departed in Christ are, he tells us, "*fallen asleep*." He adds that if they were to continue for ever in that state, they would have "*perished*" (1 Cor. xv. 8). It is well an inspired apostle has spoken these words, for had we dared to utter them we should have been held up as heretics. But there is Paul's opinion of the intermediate state. It is a sleep. If unbroken it would be tantamount to destruction, to annihilation, to death, for is it not the infidel's cry that *death is an eternal sleep*? And now we see why Paul passes on without a stop, a pause, from parting with the mortal body to enjoying the presence of Christ in the incorruptible body. It was because the intermediate state was in his mind a sleep which would pass imperceptibly and as in a moment away.

XII. Little more remains to be said of this passage. The ninth and tenth verses confirm what we have all along supposed to be meant by being "present with the Lord," for they suppose such to be fulfilled when "all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," *i.e.*, subsequently to resurrection. And from this whole passage then we receive the most abundant confirmation of our view, instead of finding any refutation of it. The intermediate state was not in itself the object of Paul's desire. On the contrary, he regards it as in itself not to be desired, thus agreeing with our whole argument

which has supposed the Hades state to be punishment for the original sin of man.

XIII. With respect to the passage in Philippians upon which so much reliance is placed by our opponents, little need be said after what has been already seen to have been Paul's mind from 2 Cor. v. 7. His expression here "having a desire to depart and to be with Christ," must receive its interpretation from Paul's fuller terms elsewhere. "To depart," means doubtless to die, and "to be with Christ" means doubtless the glorified state at resurrection. They are spoken of here as closely connected, as in fact synchronal, from that doctrine of the sleep of the intermediate state which Paul so often taught. To depart from life and die would be, he knew, to be followed at once by the trumpet calling him to arise and be with his Lord; for time would, in the actual interval however long between dying and rising, be annihilated for him who slept. We will here merely add that the opinion that during the state of death believers are "with Christ" in a state of life, involves a contradiction to one of the fundamental doctrines of Scripture. If they are then with Christ and see Him as He now is, St. John tells us expressly that such a sight would change them into *the likeness of Christ*.\* It would hence follow that they would *now* possess the fullest glory that they ever could look for and obtain. The popular view that believers during the state of death are with Christ and see Him, involves in fact the denial of the resurrection as taught by Paul, or teaches what he condemned as heresy, that the resurrection is past already.† Whoever is with Christ cannot possibly, according to Scripture, have anything greater or better to look forward to than what he is already possessed of. The popular doctrine is virtually the denial of that resurrection which Christ and His Apostles teach us to look forward to.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I. IN bringing our work to a conclusion we are desirous of saying a few words upon the support given to our view in the earliest non-canonical writing. We freely confess that the general current of patristic opinion is against us. While the Fathers are far from being unanimous in their views of the intermediate state, they generally concur in rejecting what we have put forward. One of the very earliest errors introduced into the Church was upon this question. While, however, we allow that the Fathers, as a rule, are against us, we yet will show a powerful confirmation of our view from that document of early times which is of the highest authority.

\* 1 John iii. 2.

† 2 Tim. ii. 18.



II. Among early Christian documents stands pre-eminent what is called the Apostles' Creed. This old document is, in our judgment, absolutely unique. It cannot claim to be inspired Scripture: it stands at an immeasurable height above the compositions of any or of all of the Fathers. But exactly in proportion to its value and authority we must be careful to keep it in its original integrity. Now, in this Creed, as we now have it, there are two, if not three, articles which were added to it at a date considerably later than Apostolical times. It is not disputed that the article "He descended into Hades," was an addition of later times.\* Taking this as an indubitable fact, we will say a few words on the bearing of the original omission and the subsequent insertion of this article upon our theory of Hades.

III. It is beyond a question that in the Apostles' Creed, brief as it was, it was intended to *enumerate in order each distinct act* in our Lord's life as connected with human redemption. The Creed is particularly minute and circumstantial in regard of all the circumstances connected with His death: "He was crucified, dead, and buried." Now in the Creed as it originally stood, the next article after "buried" was—"the third day he rose again from the dead."

IV. What is our inference from this? It is this, that in stating that our Lord was "dead and buried" *all was supposed to be stated that had happened to Christ until His next act of resurrection*. It was quite true that Christ went down to Hades, but as Hades and the grave were thought one and the same, it was not deemed necessary to repeat what had been already said.

V. Now if Hades had in Apostolic times been deemed a place and state altogether different from the grave, if our Lord's going to Hades was a perfectly different thing from His being dead and buried, if it was thought that while His body was dead in the grave His soul was alive and actively engaged in various ways in Hades, it is utterly inconceivable that the article "He descended into hell" should have been omitted in the original Creed. An article which is supposed to express the state of one part of our Lord's human nature, the soul, as distinguished from another part, the body, during those three great days of His burial, could not have been omitted if the belief of the Apostolic age in the nature of the soul and of Hades had agreed with that of modern times. The only reasonable inference, therefore, that can be drawn from the omission of this article from the original Creed is that at that time Christ's death and burial were supposed to be one and the same thing with His descent into Hades. Apostolical faith was that Hades and the grave were one and the same. The belief in souls existing separately from bodies in Hades did not then exist in the Church.

VI. This view of ours derives powerful support from the circumstances of the first introduction of this article of the descent of Christ into Hades into the Creed. This article was first introduced into the

\* Bingham's "Antiquities of the Christian Church," B. x. ch. iii. s. 7.



*Creed of Aquileia.* Now it is very significant that this Creed, which introduced the new formula of the descent into Hades, *omitted the older formula of "was buried."* Why? Because the descent into Hades and the burial were judged to be one and the same thing! That such was the case we will give in the words of one whose learning cannot be disputed, and whose whole views upon this question were diametrically opposed to ours: "I observe," says Bishop Pearson, "that in the Aquileian Creed, where this article was first expressed, there was no mention of Christ's burial; but the words of their confession ran thus: "*Crucified under Pontius Pilate, He descended into Hades*" (*in inferna*). From whence there is no question but the observation of Rufinus, who first expounded it, was most true, that though the Roman and Oriental Creeds had not these words, *yet they had the sense of them in the word buried.* It appeareth, therefore, that the *first intention* of putting these words in the Creed *was only to express the burial of our Saviour*, or the descent of His body into the grave."\* It is indeed marvellous that Pearson did not see what was the real sentiment of the *primitive Church* on this point, namely that Hades and the grave were identical. But his Platonic idea of the soul blinded him utterly to what he would otherwise have perceived at a glance.

VII. We have seen, then, the state of the early creeds upon this point. The Roman Creed had the expression "buried," and omitted "descended into Hades;" the Aquileian Creed had the expression "descended into Hades," and omitted "buried." It was not that they differed in sense; they only differed in words, for Hades and the grave were by both judged to be the same.

VIII. But a new idea had crept into the Church, and was taking possession of man's faith. It was *the Platonic idea of the soul*, not as the life of man which is its Scriptural sense, but as the true and real man surviving the body and unaffected by death. Men's minds were changing, or had changed upon the nature of man and the nature of death. Plato had supplanted the Bible. The intermediate state now was becoming or become fashioned after the philosophy of Plato. *The soul had survived. The soul was the true man. You must have a fit habitation for this living man.* That could not be the grave! What should it be? The soul went to Hades. So Scripture said, and so the Church correctly believed. Then Hades was not the grave! Hades was a place quite distinct from the grave! Hades was the abode of the living!

IX. And now for the Creed—the formula! That must give expression to this new faith. The survival of the soul was now a cardinal point, of far more consequence, in fact, than the burial of the body. What was to be done? The Creed of Aquileia, perfectly innocent of the intention, afforded the hint and the means. *Add the formula of Aquileia to the Roman or Apostolic formula!* Thus added,

\* Pearson on the Creed, Art. V.

they will no longer appear expressive of one act of Christ, but of two. The burial will be a different thing from the descent into Hades. And so Plato takes credit for our Apostles' Creed as we have it now—"Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into Hades." The two expressions, originally of one meaning, and therefore interchanged for one another, were henceforth used as expressions of a totally different meaning, and to be kept quite distinct. The *addition* of the Aquileian formula to the Roman or Apostolic formula was the indication of the triumph of the Platonic theory of the soul over that of the Bible. The change of opinion produced the change of Creed. One brief sentence from Theophylact expresses accurately this whole thing that we have been reasoning out. "You shall find," says that writer, "that there is *some difference betwixt Hades and death*, namely, that Hades containeth the souls, but death bodies. *For the souls are immortal.*"\* There is truly the whole case stated. It was discovered from Plato that souls were immortal,—were the men who had not truly died at all! These living men must have a suitable place, and Hades was then discovered to be the abode of the living. But for the Platonic doctrine of the immortality of the soul Hades and the grave would have been allowed on all hands to be one and the same place, and the article, "He descended into Hades," would never have been tacked on to the Roman from the Aquileian Creed. The sooner it is left out the better!

X. And now we have brought our enquiry to its conclusion. If Scripture, interpreted according to reasonable principles, and not forced from its obvious meaning to favour the requirements of a philosophical dogma, is to decide this question, we consider that it has been decided. We have considered what the Bible tells us of our nature, and have found that it teaches very differently from Plato. We have followed it as it opens out the view of our intermediate state, and have seen that it describes it as a state of death for man, and not one of life. We have seen that its time for judgment and retribution is not the period fixed upon by some few Heathen philosophers who were but guessing, even in their noblest and truest speculations, but is a period of which they knew nothing, viz.—the second coming of the Lord, and the resurrection of the dead. We have seen that while our view of death makes it truly in itself a terrible thing, suitable for what God has pronounced to be the punishment of sin; yet that, in His mercy and wisdom, this state of death, passing unheeded over the sleeper, does but bring the child of God nearer to his reward than the popular view of an intermediate unsatisfying existence would do. We have seen the all-important bearing of our view upon doctrine, sweeping away at once and completely, the vast pile of falsehood which has been built upon erroneous views of the intermediate state from the earliest period of the Church to our own day. We have calmly considered the few passages of the Bible, which even seem to

\* Theophylact, quoted in Usher's Answer, Ch. viii.

be opposed to our theory, and have rather found them, when interpreted according to the analogy of Scripture, to be in favour of it. And, lastly, we have considered the most venerable document of Christian antiquity, the Creed of the Apostles, and seen its important confirmation of our views as drawn from Scripture. To the candid consideration of the Christian student we now commend a work which we fully believe to be most important to Christian faith in these dangerous times, because it is agreeable to the revealed will of God our Father.

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